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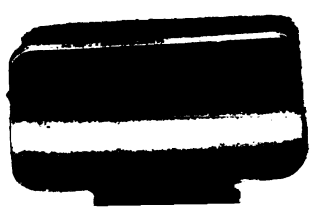
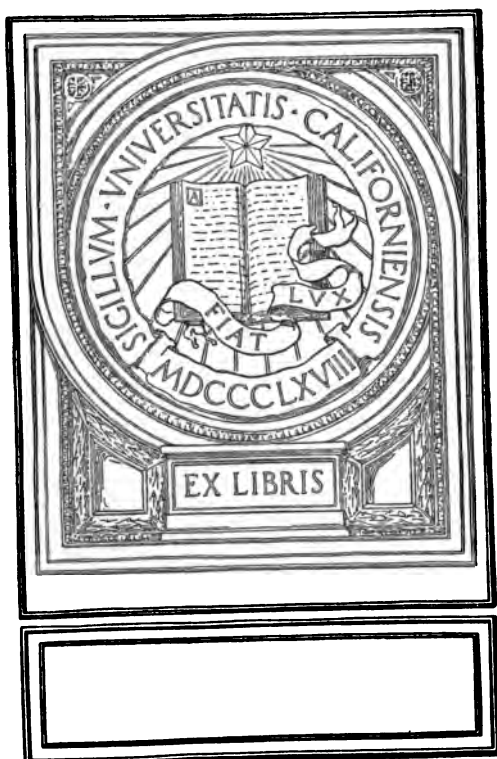
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Stimulus, Feb

R. C. Pease
THE JEW.

Hath not a Jew eyes? hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions,
senses, affections, passions? fed with the same food, hurt with the
same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means,
warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer, as a Christian is?

SHYLOCK.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

EDWARD BULL, HOLLES STREET.

1832.

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TO VINU
ABROAD
C. WRITING, BEAUFORT HOUSE, STRAND.

INTRODUCTION.

THE Editor of the Jew deems it necessary to state that these volumes are a very free version of a work, bearing the same title, which has attained to a high degree of popularity upon the continent. Its character has been already so correctly given by LEITCH RITCHIE, author of "*The Romance of French History*," &c. that the Editor deems no apology necessary for availing himself of so admirable an illustration as introductory to the present volumes.

"Time passes, but the Jew stands still. The desert of Arabia was only a type of the present populous and cultivated world, through which he now journeys to the promised land. His ancient faith still guides him through the wilderness of men, and the shadow of his prophet-chief stalks before him like a pillar of cloud along the earth. The arms of his warfare indeed are different, because the passengers he encounters on his route are so. He no longer falls in with 'a quiet and secure people' upon whom he may fall with the edge of the sword, and sweep them from the tottering grandsire to the cradled infant, from the face of the earth; his bow and his spear are broken; his shield is beaten to the dust; the voice of cursing has gone forth against him, and he is scattered

abroad upon the world, a vagrant and an outlaw. He cannot stand up before his enemies; and he therefore creeps. He cannot breast the torrent which would overwhelm him; and he therefore goes round about. The fatal prophecy which broke his nation in pieces has been fulfilled. Wherever the cross was planted it became in his infidel imagination a Upas-tree; and woe to the Jew who lingered under its branches! The Jew has no part in the customs and institutions of his fellow men. What are the governors of the world to him who turns his face every day to the east in expectation of the coming of his lawful prince? The Jew wants no political emancipation at the hands of any other than the Messiah; he makes no complaints as certain 'agitators were told,' even a few days ago at a meeting of his people in London; he may be despised, but he despises more bitterly in return; he may suffer, but he knows well how to revenge."

The changes which have taken place in manners and institutions, within the last two or three centuries, have no doubt had their effect both on the moral and physical situation of the Jew; but the basis of his character remains the same. It is true, he still contributes, even in the most liberal countries of Europe, to the support of laws, which he has no

hand in making; and upholds, with the sweat of his brow, a religion which his soul abhors; but we know some classes of Christians, who are yoked neck by neck with the despised Jew, in these labours of hate;—and besides, the latter has neither wish nor pretext to escape from the degradation—his hourly expected Messiah being not merely a God and a priest, but a temporal prince, who shall revenge his injuries, build up the temple of his ancient faith, and gather from the ends of the earth the scattered remnant of Israel, into that glorious land, denominated alike by Jew and Gentile, “The Holy.” In the meantime, he is precisely what circumstances have made him. Denied access to honourable employments, he has recourse to the most base; he is a usurer, a trafficker in old clothes and stolen goods;—in any thing which can turn the penny, and “spoil the Egyptian.” The instances which arise among his people, of learned and amiable men, and virtuous and beautiful women, are only exceptions to the general rule; the remnant matches with the piece, and the comparatively free Jew of the nineteenth century, identifies himself with the cringing bondsman of the fifteenth, and he again with the cunning spoiler of his task-master, who first stole forth on that dreary pilgrimage into the Desert, which is not finished to this day.”

dissolve them. In the lower apartments of the Vine inn, the heated stove compensated for the inclemency of the weather, but there was not yet a spark of fire in the upper; though the best room in the house, called, from a huge bouquet of flowers painted over the door, "the May-room," was occupied by a visiter of some distinction. The ordinary appendages of gentle birth, sword, gloves, spurs, boots, and plumed hat, were scattered in confusion on the floor. Their owner lay in other respects quite dressed in bed, sleeping off the debauch of St. Martin's eve. Beside him reposed a handsome boy, wrapped in a horseman's cloak. The placid smile upon the countenance of the little slumberer contrasted strongly with the expression of his companion's face, bloated with intemperance, and distorted by wild dreams. The latter at length stirred, rubbed his forehead, eyes, and bushy beard, with his broad palm, and awoke. He looked with some surprise about the room, and at his own person; but his surprise increased to astonishment when he perceived his bedfellow; at sight of whom he sprang up as if he had been stung by a scorpion. Muttering some scarcely articulate words,

and shivering with cold, he drew on his boots, and stamped thrice upon the floor with such vehemence as to startle the boy, who, however, turned with a faint cry, and again fell asleep. A tall, gaunt figure, in the habiliments, somewhat the worse for wear, of a serving-man, entered, his lips livid with cold, and inquired his master's pleasure.

"Tell me, Rodolph," said the latter, "how did it happen that I went to bed in my vest and doublet?"

"Your humble servant had to put you to bed," replied Rodolph, with an awkward bow. "St. Martin was too much for you last night, and so"——

"Silence, knave!" cried the master. "But how came this child here?" he resumed, in a lower tone.

"Your honour will be pleased to remember," said Rodolph, receding two or three paces, "that as I was lighting you home last night from the great room at the Rose Garden, with the pine-splinter which the cherry-cheeked Dorothy forced upon me, we found the boy asleep on the ground at the corner of the High Street, at the foot of the image of the Blessed Virgin."

"Right! I recollect it all now," replied the cavalier, rubbing his hands, which began to be numbed with cold. "But what is our host about that he does not give us a fire? Are we to freeze to death here?"

"We must freeze," said Rodolph, "or seek other quarters, for the landlord will not lend any more money, and demands payment of our bill."

"Nothing more just," answered the master; "but demanding is one thing and paying another. I have not a single gilder left; all went last night for supper, wine, and play. The old fool must wait."

Rodolph shook his head. "I doubt whether he will, sir," said he, cautiously opening the door, the latch of which he had hitherto held in his hand. "The man told me just now he would seize your horse unless you pay him this very morning the score which you have been running up for a week past."

"Zounds!" cried the enraged master, catching up his sword, while his attendant, who was no stranger to such sallies of temper, quickly placed the door between them—"what means the impudent knave? Let him lay a finger on

my Roland, if he dare! Tell him to come up to me this instant, d'ye hear?"

Rodolph hastened down stairs. The master proudly placed his hat upon his head, and impatiently strode to and fro, while mentally preparing his address to mine host of the Vine. It was not long before the latter entered, in obedience to the summons, bringing with him the tally on which the stranger's debt was marked by notches.

"What is the amount of my score?" asked the latter haughtily, as though his pockets were full of ducats.

"Twenty turnoses, three pfennings, for master, servant, and horse," promptly answered the host of the Vine.

"Is that all?" cried the stranger, though the charges were exorbitant. "For such a trifle as that, my good friend, you would not distress me, I trow?"

"By no means," replied the host. "You have only to pay me, and my house and all within it shall be again entirely at your service."

"You must be hard of hearing, surely," rejoined the cavalier, with a look of importance. "Hark ye, my friend, I was unlucky 'at play

last night, and the Martinmas feast was rather costly. It is not in my power to satisfy you to-day, but as soon as I return from Constance, you shall be paid."

The landlord looked steadfastly at the speaker for a moment, shrugged his shoulders, and went to the door. "Whither do you go?" asked his debtor.

"To lock up the stable," coolly rejoined the citizen. "If you must go to Constance, you may e'en foot it. Your horse shall not stir till I am paid what you owe me."

"What!" shouted the indignant cavalier. "Impertinent publican, know you to whom you speak? Gerard Von Hülshofen was not born a gentleman to suffer a contemptible burgher to insult him in this manner to his face."

"I know you well," replied the host. "Who is there that does not know the most daring of all the needy gentry in the valley of the Rhine, whom the worshipful senate of Franckfort has hired for its champion in the tilts; who leaves no adversary unvanquished, no bowl undrained, no damsel unassailed, and no publican unbilked? For this very reason I shall detain your horse."

"The horse belongs to my masters of Franckfort," cried the debtor, in a tone of defiance.

"Then your masters of Franckfort may redeem him," answered the creditor, with provoking indifference. "The worshipful senate will not suffer an honest citizen to be robbed by their retainer."

"I am a gentleman, fellow!" roared the cavalier, "and though I serve burghers, I do it of my own free will, and not"——

"My good master," rejoined the host, "it is not for me to judge of the conduct of a gentleman; but I wish you had spent your Martinmas elsewhere. I did not invite you, and of course cannot be expected to pay your charges out of my own pocket. I shall therefore impound your horse without more ado."

"Dare but to lay a finger upon him!" cried Gerard. "Insolent scoundrel! do you suppose that my friends will not stand by me?"

"Ab, Master of Hülshofen," said the host, laughing, "you have lived too long in the world to say that seriously. Friends become enemies the moment you need their assistance: and as for yours, with whom you have been gambling and carousing for a week past, some are more

at home upon the highway than in their mortgaged castles and manor-houses; while others, the dissolute sons of burghers, have renounced the trades of their fathers, that they may have nothing to do but squander the old folks' savings. But hark!—surely I hear some of them coming up stairs. Try what you can do, sir. Twenty turnoses, remember—the pfennings I'll forgive you. The debt discharged, I will open the stable-door, and ensure your horse a free pass to Constance. Twenty turnoses—not an albus less, depend upon it.”

The landlord coolly retired, when four men, whose looks bespoke the excesses of the preceding night, abruptly entered. “Good morrow, brother Hülshofen,” cried they, as in turn they shook his benumbed hand. “How are you? How have you slept? What, no fire this bitter cold morning?” Gerard hesitated not a moment to acquaint them with the unpleasant situation in which he stood. The story of his embarrassment was received by his friends with bursts of laughter.

“A pretty mess to be in, truly!” exclaimed the almost gigantic Werner Von Hirzenhern. “The dessert is as sad as the feast was merry.”

"But what is to be done?" cried Wolf Von Eppenstein. "May the devil fetch me, body and soul, if I can assist you, brother Gerard. You know well enough that the highway supplies our daily bread; and it is precisely your employers—God confound them!—who have reduced its proceeds to such a pittance that it is scarcely worth the picking up. The travellers to the council have, it is true, put something into our pouches, but wives and families must live as well as we; and Martinmas, too, must be kept. And so we have met once more to take a flagon of Our Lady's Milk in good fellowship together, as we must be off to-morrow."

"Help yourself," said the impetuous Veit of Hornberg. "Break open the stable-door, and ride away before the face of the sneaking varlet. I will assist you, and the greater the uproar the better."

"The Franckfort folk will shut me up in the Eschenheim tower, if the story should reach their ears," rejoined Gerard, shaking his head. "But to you, my friends," he continued, "it would be an easy matter to help me, for the spring will by and by bring you passage-boats and merchants coming to the fair, who will

make you ample amends for the trifling loan—in case I should not be able to repay you till then.”

Eppenstein drew from the pocket of his vest a relic of St. Marcellinus, set in gilt copper, upon which all three took the most solemn oath that it was totally out of their power to succour their mutual friend. Gerard, well knowing that after such an oath, false as it might be, he had nothing to expect, turned to the fourth visiter, who had hitherto been a silent witness of the scene. “To you, my dear Trautwein,” said he, in his kindest tone, “I trust I shall not apply in vain. You are rich; you won all my ready money yesterday, and will not refuse to rescue me from unmerited disgrace.”

The goldsmith smiled, but with an expression cold as ice, shrugged his shoulders, and replied, “Master of Hülshofen, you ought to know that tradesmen need all the money they can get; and I assure you, that the emperor and empire, wife and children, and gentlemen who contrive to live by their wits, take special care that they shall not be overburdened with it. I am, therefore, unable to do more for you than to forgive you the five groschen for which I took your word yesterday.”

"Would to Heaven that all the bonfires made yesterday could fall upon you at once, and burn you to ashes!" ejaculated Gerard, in despair. "My horse!—my poor horse! The day after to-morrow I must be in Constance. I was obliged to make oath to that effect to the bailiffs, Holzhausen and Braunfels. The emperor gives a tournament, at which I am to support the honour of Franckfort and the empire. I shall be disgraced for ever, if I fail to be there: and without my good steed, 'tis impossible for me to break a lance."

"Provoking!—terribly provoking!" ejaculated the visitors, preparing to depart. "If you will take a cup of wine, come along with us," said Hornberg, goodnaturedly; but Gerard, peremptorily rejecting the offer, made no effort to detain his visitors. Trautwein remained behind at the door.

"Now those noisy fellows are gone, I would fain have another word with you," said he, with some appearance of sympathy. "Though you are shivering here with cold, yet I have stayed behind to give you a piece of advice."

"And what is that?" asked Gerard, as he angrily paced up and down the room.

"The emperor will not give any tournament at Constance the day after to-morrow, because he is still at Aix, awaiting his coronation," said Trautwein; "but still you are in an awkward predicament, and it is not in my power to help you out of it; yet there are people who would no doubt be glad to do so, if they had a prospect of gaining by the job."

"Who are those people?" Gerard eagerly inquired.

"Why," said the goldsmith, with some hesitation—"the Jews."

"What! Hebrews!" shouted Gerard. "Are you mad?"

"How so?" asked Trautwein, coolly. "Hebrew money is as good as ours; and besides, it comes out of Christian pockets, as our princes and nobles know to their cost."

"Hem!" said Gerard, thoughtfully. "All my life I have taken good care to keep out of the clutches of those knaves, and now—at fifty—yet who can tell—to get out of this cursed scrape—. Where do the crew harbour? I will go immediately—."

"Surely not in broad day?" said the goldsmith, detaining him.

"Right," rejoined Gerard. "People might talk—I will wait——To-night——"

"By no means," said Trautwein, interrupting him. "Know you not that it is forbidden, under a heavy penalty, to go at night into the house of a Jew, either to borrow or to pay?"

"What am I to do then?" asked Gerard, angrily.

"Wait," rejoined Trautwein, "till I send you a trusty person, with whom you may negotiate."

"And through whose means, I dare say, I shall soon be the talk of the whole city."

"The very reverse. I know one, who resides in the vicinity of Franckfort—one whose discretion may be relied on, and with whom indeed I have myself had many dealings. He happens to be here just now, and may possibly be induced to assist you. I will send him to you, and meanwhile desire my cousin, the landlord, to let you have a fire."

"Go then, at once, and don't stay chattering here!" cried Gerard, thrusting him out at the door. He then began as usual to chafe his hands, muttering one curse after another, and swearing never more to place reliance upon

friends. A faint cry interrupted the current of his thoughts, and as it proceeded from behind the curtains of the capacious bed, he hastily approached the bed-side, when he beheld the child, apparently four or five years old, whom he had rescued from the inclemency of the preceding night, sitting up, closely wrapped in a coarse cloak, so that nothing was to be seen but his face, shaded with a profusion of brown hair, while tears trickled plentifully from his bright blue eyes. The boy was somewhat startled at seeing the fiery visage of his protector garnished with a bushy beard; but presently recollecting that it was the same person who had taken him out of the streets when perishing with cold, and warmed and put him to bed, he extended his little arms imploringly towards his protector, and gave him such a look, that the old bachelor was moved by the helpless innocence of the child. Lifting him up, enveloped as he was in the cloak, and putting the coverlet over it, he set him upon his knee. "Come, my little fellow," said he, "let us have some chat together. We had not time to get acquainted last night. What is your name?"—"Thomas;" replied the boy,

boldly and intelligibly.—“And your father’s?”—“I have no father.”—“But you must have a mother?”—“Yes, mother, and Gundel.”—“What is your mother’s name?”—“I don’t know.”—“Where does she live?”—“Oh, a great way off.”—“And where is she now?—Nay, if you don’t know——.” The boy sorrowfully shook his head. “But tell me, Tommy,” continued Gerard, inquisitively, “how long have you been here?”—“My name is Thomas,” replied the child: “Tommy has four legs, and I have but two, and so they call me Thomas. We left Tommy at home. You’ll take me home, won’t you?”—“If I did but know where your home is, my little man.”—“It is a very long way off. We stopped to sleep three times before we got here last night.”—“But how came you in the street?”—“I don’t know; I fell asleep in the car, and when I awoke, I was on the ground. O, how cold I was when you took me up! Mother lost me, I suppose.”—“Was your mother good to you?”—“No, she was always cross and angry; but Gundel was good to me; I’d rather go to her and Tommy than to mother.”

The cavalier shook his head thoughtfully,

having no doubt but that the boy had been purposely dropped in a strange place, under favour of the darkness. He could extract nothing further from the child, than that his mother's house stood upon a hill, not far from a river; that there were in its vicinity a wood and a village; and at no great distance a town, where the child remembered to have been at a fair not long before. He had, in all probability, been purposely kept ignorant of the name of his mother's house, as well as that of the river and town. Without companions of his own age, he knew nobody but his mother, whom he did not love, the kind Gundel, with whom he longed to be again, and his four-footed Tommy, whose society he most painfully missed. Gerard soon perceived, that the tenderness of his own feelings, softened by the previous night's carouse, had involved him in a perplexing adventure, and probably brought upon him a burden, which, in his straitened circumstances, he should not be long able to bear. A sudden thought struck him, and he examined the clothes of the child, who might perhaps have about him either money or jewels, for the purpose of indemnifying the person who should

find him : his search, however, was vain. Disappointed, he set down the boy, and inwardly murmuring at his ill fortune, again traversed the room with agitated strides. The poor child, meanwhile, crept close to the stove, in which a fire had been kindled through Trautwein's interposition, and wept in silence, partly at the recollection of the kind Gundel, and partly from the cravings of hunger. While Gerard was considering how he should get rid of this unwelcome addition to his establishment, and recruit his exhausted finances, a shuffling step was heard approaching from without, and a gentle knock at the massive oaken door immediately succeeded. Gerard quickly opened it, when one of the circumcised stood before him. There was nothing remarkable in his stature, and still less in his habiliments, which simply denoted the itinerant Jew trader. His face, on the other hand, was sufficiently striking. It bespoke an age of not much less than fifty years—was pale and meagre, and strongly marked either by profound grief or severe bodily suffering; yet the eyes, though rather small, were animated and piercing as those of

the lizard. The forehead, scantily furnished with thin gray hair, afforded full scope to the singular expression of the features. A broad scar, running obliquely from the right temple across the cheek and nose to the left ear, might be said to divide the face into two unequal parts. The nose, prominent and aquiline, gave evidence of eastern origin, and the form of the mouth might have been termed handsome, had not a falling of the lower lip imparted an equivocal and somewhat sinister expression to the countenance by no means pleasing. The beard, short, curly, and grizzled, harmonized with the rest of the figure.

The Jew made an humble obeisance to the cavalier, but without uttering a word. "Who are you?" asked Gerard, sharply. "What want you here?"

"I wish to know, sir, wherefore I am wanted here," replied the Jew, in a submissive tone. "The worthy Master Trautwein hath sent me to you. He told me you had need of my services, and I come to offer them."

"Trautwein!" exclaimed Gerard. "With his recommendation you are right welcome,

that is to say, provided you are not a native of Worms, or resident here: for I require, above all things, that you keep my secret."

"I know not, sir," replied the Jew, in the same tone as before, "how you can doubt the secresy of my brethren of Worms. They are the best of our people. If, however, you imagine that you have reason to suspect them, you may at least depend upon me. I was born at Friedberg, and this mark upon my garment will prove to you that I belong not to Worms, where this shibboleth is fallen into disuse."

Here he pointed to a circle of yellow silk, which every Jew in and about Franckfort was obliged to wear upon the left breast. Gerard, impatient to extricate himself from his dilemma, gave the Jew a circumstantial account of his situation, and demanded a loan upon his written acknowledgement. The imperative tone in which this demand was made, plainly indicated that he did not contemplate a denial; the more therefore was he surprised at the dissenting shake of the head of his calculating creditor. "Look you, sir," at length the Jew began, after a considerable pause, "we adhere to the lessons which our fathers have taught us.

From mine I have learnt never to trust to a worthless bit of paper. It is at best but a questionable pledge. I am, nevertheless, willing to help you, sir, if you can give me security in valuables, or on the word of a man to whom integrity is dear, even though he is called upon to exercise it only towards a Jew."

"There lies the difficulty!" cried Gerard. "Any idiot might safely lend upon a sufficient surety. I have neither jewels, nor any thing of value but my horse, and I shall not part with him at any price."

"I believe you," rejoined Ben David. "A handsome beast, in goodsooth! I saw you riding yesterday, as St. Martin in the procession, and a noble figure you cut upon him."

"But how am I to get out of this cursed place?" asked the cavalier. "Will you take the security of the Masters of Eppenstein, Hornberg, and Hirzenhorn?"

"Of what use would be their security to me?" said Ben David. "They are above my reach; and besides, I have had too many dealings with them to take their word again. To be sure, if it was the worshipful Master of Dalberg, the chamberlain of Worms, and the protector of

our faith — or even Master Trautwein——, but,” he added, with a smile—“ the former knows you not, and the latter is too prudent to be surety for another.”

“ D—d Hebrew hound !” roared Gerard ;
“ Do not drive me mad. I will teach you to pay respect to the word of a gentleman. You are ready enough to tell out your coin at the bidding of the trader-magistrate of an imperial city ; but a man of birth and honour may lie and rot for you. Obey me instantly, or—”

The Jew shrugged his shoulders. If the city demands our money,” said he coolly, “ our property is wrested from us by force, and we must submit. The emperor affords us protection, and calls us his valets ; and being content with liberty to breathe, though in servitude, we cheerfully give what we have in return. But private individuals have no right to plunder us, at least not in Worms, where we experience reasonable protection.”

As he finished these words, he approached the door for the purpose of retiring. Gerard, however, pressed by urgent necessity, detained him, and abating much of his haughty and im-

perious demeanour, said to him: "I meant no offence, Ben David; but you should not keep a man of honour so long upon the rack."

"With due respect to your honour," replied the Jew, "let me tell you, that your behaviour has not made me particularly anxious for a closer acquaintance."

"Let me say just one word more to you," resumed Gerard, stepping between Ben David and the door. "I will deal with you just as I would with a Christian and my equal, though you are neither. I will pledge my name and arms to repay you, principal and interest, by Lætare Sunday, next year; and engage besides, that if I should not be able to settle with you before, I will take up my quarters here at the Vine with two serving-men and three horses, till you are satisfied?"

"By my troth!" cried Ben David, "what a scurvy knave you must take me for! There would then be two sufferers instead of one—I, because my debt would not be discharged, and the host, because you would not pay for your quarters. No, no; though I am a Jew, I will not bring a loss upon an honest Christian, like the master of this house. I see you would

be ready to pawn your wife into the bargain, if you had one. Adieu."

"Begone, infernal Hebrew railer!" bellowed the cavalier, seizing his sword, and brandishing it toward the Jew;—"begone, or my good blade shall soon crop both your Israelitish ears!"

Ben David was making a precipitate retreat; but at that moment little Thomas, who had till then listened in silence behind the stove, ran forward with a loud scream, terrified at the sight of the threatening sword, and caught hold of Gerard. The latter stayed his arm, and stooped down to pacify the affrighted child. Ben David, having meanwhile cast a glance at the little trembler, paused also for a moment with a look of surprise, and at length coolly re-entered the room. "Here still, vagabond?" cried Gerard, impatiently.

"With submission, honoured sir," said Ben David, leering with his left eye at the exasperated cavalier, and with his right at the child, "is that your boy?"

"What can that concern you?" asked Gerard, in the same impatient tone. The supple Jew bowed, and slightly shook his head. "For

the boy's sake," he continued, "I should like to come to an arrangement with you."

"The boy is not mine," rejoined Gerard.—
"To tell the truth, he is a burden that I should be glad to get rid of."

"Why not do so, then?" inquired Ben David; and with the curiosity peculiar to his race, he sought to learn further particulars respecting the little stranger.

Gerard made no secret of the manner in which he had come by the boy, nor of his communications, imperfect as they were. The Jew listened attentively, while the muscles of his face betrayed an agitation which could not have escaped a less practised observer than Gerard. With apparent indifference, however, he waved his head from side to side, and when Hülshofen had finished—"It is an extraordinary coincidence," said he. "The child has neither father nor mother; for she who has so unnaturally forsaken him is as good as dead. Now it so happens that I know a disconsolate mother, who would give what her slender means permit for a boy of the same age as one whom death has prematurely snatched from her. Let me have this orphan for that sorrowing mother,

that he may be her joy, and obtain a home."

"Is it a Christian woman for whom you destine the child?" asked Gerard, catching instantly at the Jew's proposal.

"None more orthodox," replied Ben David—"the widow Shechler of Friedberg. She keeps a small shop, which little more than suffices to support her."

"And will you swear that you will not force the orphan to turn Jew?" resumed Gerard, who strove to silence the scruples of conscience by an empty formality.

"I swear it!" rejoined Ben David, with emphasis. "How could I ever enter the eternal Jerusalem if I had deliberately rendered a human being unhappy? Of all human beings a Jew is the most miserable."

"Very true," answered Gerard, with a contemptuous look, not aware of the real meaning of Ben David's words. "But let us strike a bargain at once—tell me down fifty turnoses, and take the boy with you."

"Lord of my life! fifty!" exclaimed the Jew, lifting up his hands, as if in the utmost astonishment. "What can you be thinking of,

sir? We were talking just now of twenty, or so; where should I get such a sum as"——

"There is the door!" said Gerard, turning his back upon him. Ben David showed no inclination to take the hint, but drew nearer. "If I give you thirty turnoses," said he, "I shall give you every heller I possess."

"Base chafferer!" exclaimed Gerard; "who would sell a human soul for such a paltry price?"

"I could wager, however," said Ben David, ironically, "that you would sell me for less."

"Right!" thundered the cavalier, "that I might have the pleasure of seeing you hung between two hounds. But a Christian is not to be bartered for thirty pieces of silver."

"Did not Judas sell your Messiah for that very sum?" asked Ben David.

"And who but a Jew could have driven such a bargain?" cried Gerard, flushed with anger. "Now begone. I begin to fear that I shall not be justified in resigning this little innocent to such a hoary miscreant."

Ben David shrugged his shoulders, raised his eyes, with a sigh, towards heaven, moved to the table, drew from his wallet a leathern pouch, not

over filled, and began to count out money. Gerard meanwhile affected the greatest indifference, though already inwardly rejoicing in his victory over the wary Hebrew, while the innocent object of his selfish bargain was filled with infantine delight at the brightness of the silver coins as they passed through the skinny hands of the Jew, who deliberately placed them in separate parcels upon the table. Gerard could scarcely moderate his impatience at the Hebrew's tardiness, who at length shook the empty pouch. "There," said he, "that is all my moneys—two-and-forty turnoses—neither more nor less. Will you take them?—I can't make up the fifty—Will you take them?"

"Then pack—and next time you are sent for by a gentleman, provide yourself with more money," dryly answered Gerard, who began to acquire an insight into the mode of dealing of his new acquaintance.

"I cannot give more," said the Jew: "that and my life are all I possess."

"Keep both, then, in the name of Heaven, and begone!" replied the cavalier, with increased assurance. "I shall find some other person."

"You are a bad salesman," said Ben David, making a motion as if to collect the money together again; but when he saw that Gerard showed no disposition to prevent him, he let it lie, and drew from his wallet a woollen rag, in which was tied up more money than the empty pouch had contained. "See," he resumed, "what your obstinacy forces me to do. These are moneys intrusted to my care, and I am obliged to take from them eight turnoses to make up the sum for you. I could almost knock myself on the head for doing so; but I feel too much friendship for you not to help you out of your distress."

The cavalier counted the turnoses, and swept them into a heap with manifest delight. "The money for the child," said he, "never to be repaid; but I shall inquire at Friedberg how you have disposed of him."

"That you may," answered the Jew, with the utmost sincerity. "I shall give the boy a kind mother."

The little fellow at first refused to go. "The man will take you to your mother!" said Gerard.

"I like better to stay with you," replied the child.

“ But what will Gundel and little Hans say ?”
added Gerard.

The Jew promised the boy in kind words that he should see them both : he was therefore soon reconciled to his new guide, and hastened away with him without much ado in taking leave.

CHAPTER II.

"WHAT! the horse already saddled?" said a young man of noble carriage to Von Hülshofen's servant, who was placing the trappings on his master's redeemed steed. "I never thought, after what I had heard, that the matter would have terminated so well!"

Having said this, he abruptly entered the May-room, and stood before the cavalier. The latter was sitting over a goblet of Malmsey, rating the obsequious landlord in good German, about his indecorous behaviour towards respectable strangers. His visiter no sooner appeared, than abruptly dismissing mine host of the Vine, he turned towards the young man in his merriest humour.

"You are welcome, noble youth," said he. "You have kept your word, although you were one of the Martinmas revellers. You find it no

disgrace to ride in the company of an old tilter who has been obliged to sell himself to your city for poor pay."

"And why not?" asked the young man. "My best associate is a good-humoured fellow, wherever I happen to find him, whether he peeps from under a noble's coronet or a peasant's bonnet. I heard of the dilemma you were in, and I came with a full purse to liberate you from the snares of the Edomites, but to my great joy I find you already delivered. How have you contrived to bring the business to so speedy a termination?"

Gerard, whose heart bounded with joy, gave a bold but humorous detail of the manner in which he had obtained the Jew's money. The young man's countenance, however, suddenly lowered; and when Hülshofen had finished his narrative, he exclaimed with vehemence, "Fie upon thee! Destroy thy escutcheon, and break thy sword, thou man of base thrift! Art thou not worse than the Jew, who in fact only purchased a Christian's soul, which thou hast bartered? Gerard, does such conduct become a gentleman?"

"Necessity has no law," replied Gerard. "Had

you heard how the landlord calumniated me—had you seen how my best friends deserted me—had you suffered from a cold stove and an empty stomach, you would form a more charitable opinion of me.”

“What ! sell him to a Jew ?” continued the young man. “Poor boy ! I was present when you found him. Methinks I see his beautiful countenance at this moment ; I recommended him to your best care when I gave you over in a state of intoxication to your servant at the house-door ; yet what availed my caution ? He has been bartered, like another Joseph, to the Israelite ! But wait a little ! If you have occasioned the loss of a Christian’s soul, St. Martin will not forget you.”

“Well then,” replied Gerard, “leave the matter to St. Martin, and growl no more at me. Let us to horse. With money in our pockets, the cask will be every where at our service. Are you ready to start ?”

“My horse is standing at my door,” answered the young man, in a serious tone. “Let us take our wine there, for I will not taste a drop which is purchased by a Christian’s blood.”

Gerard found this proposal very acceptable,

and they both made the best of their way. His gaunt serving-man, who was condemned to go on foot, passed quickly through the gate, while the gentlemen were still drinking merrily in the Rose Garden. A rosy-cheeked Hebe poured out the generous wine, when the enraptured youth, throwing his arm round her slender waist, swore that he would remember her even in the midst of the festivities at Costnitz.

"See now!" exclaimed the cunning maiden, "if this deceiver does not deny that he has left a sweetheart behind him in Franckfort. I should not wonder if he has a second waiting for him at Costnitz."

The young man contracted his brows. "Nonsense, mad girl!" exclaimed he. "A man must pay great respect to your beauty to suffer such freedom to pass unnoticed!"

"Be not angry with me, dear sir!" said Dorothy, in a tone of entreaty. "It certainly does not become me to joke in this manner with persons of condition, but many a jocose speech is pardoned which escapes from a free tongue"—and she offered him her blooming lips to kiss, which he did not refuse. "Moreover," she continued, "you may be assured you will lose your

heart at Costnitz to the pretty stranger, should you chance to see her, who stopped here yesterday on her journey thither. If you meet her there, you are irrecoverably lost."

"A pretty stranger, did you say?" asked the youth, anxious to ascertain who she was; "pray was she a young lady, or"——

"She is probably not a lady of quality," replied the maiden; "but she is a beautiful young widow, whose sable dress became her amazingly. She had dark eyes, and"—— ●

"A female in mourning, who merely stopped here on her way to Costnitz?" asked Gerard, curious to learn further particulars.

"Yes, she ordered one glass of wine only to be brought, and drove quickly off. Her whole suite consisted simply of a coachman and waiting-maid."

"It was she, without doubt!" exclaimed Gerard. "Accident has assisted us in tracing her."

Dorothy was thunderstruck.

"In tracing whom?" asked the young man, giving his noisy companion, by way of rebuke, a smart cuff on the ribs.

Gerard took the hint, and was silent. Having briefly learnt from Dorothy, that the stranger in

mourning had actually taken the road to Costnitz, the two friends mounted their horses, and soon left Worms behind them.

"Tell me, for Heaven's sake," said the youth, in a tone of ill-humour, "are you one of the devil's hirelings? You first enter into an unlawful and inhuman traffic with a Jew, and then you would bring yourself, and me as privy to the transaction, into the power of a chattering hussy, and perhaps to the scaffold, by your ill-timed babbling."

"Come, come," rejoined Gerard, "be not so angry; my heart is by far too open, and if that woman were really the same"——

"Silence!" exclaimed the young man, angrily. "I should not be surprised if you were to tell the next woman you meet with, that you have sold her child, merely because she wears a black dress."

"Let us say no more," said Gerard. "St. Martin will cleanse me of the sin, and let that suffice. We will talk rather of the sweetheart which you have left behind you in Franckfort."

"I shall say nothing further upon this point," said his young friend, smiling, "than that I am destined to the service of the church, and there-

fore can have no sweetheart to think of. What use is it to contend against a father's orders and a mother's vow? My good mother, rest her soul, died in bringing me into the world; but in gratitude to Heaven for having made me a robust and healthy child, she bequeathed me to the church, and died happy. My father, in giving me an education, paid little attention to my mother's vow. I was far, however, from supposing, that her wishes would not be seriously fulfilled. But when my father took another wife, and gave me a worthless step-mother, it became another matter."

"I believe it," said Gerard.

"The weather at home changed on a sudden," continued the young man, proceeding with his narrative. "My step-mother, a plump, blooming girl of about eighteen, took possession of her lord's estate and property—an Abigail in the vigour of life united to a hoary David. She made a sacrifice of her youth to his riches, and he surrendered his respectability for her rosy cheeks. So long as the nuptial festivities lasted, this unequally-matched pair had nothing to interrupt their peace; but no sooner were they over, than it began to be disturbed. My father

acted unwisely in keeping a grown-up son in his house, for the love I bore him soon occasioned a disagreement with my step-mother; but how this occurred is a matter of indifference to you."

"Go on, I understand you," rejoined Gerard, with an astute smile.

"In one word," continued the youth, "On a sudden, the obligation of keeping my mother's vow was insisted on, and upon my step-mother giving birth to a son at the expiration of a twelvemonth, my fate was at once decided. My sister, who was older than myself, and of a more determined character, had already forsaken her father's roof in disgust, and had taken possession of a property on the borders of Thüringen, which had been presented to her by an uncle, who is superior of a convent in Italy, and whose protection she had invoked against her step-mother. I soon followed her, and was placed under the care of the celebrated abbot, Johannes; who, after spending five years in drudging with me through the *privium* and *quadrivium*, at length qualified me for the sacred office. Shortly after this period, my uncle, the abbot, wrote to my father, to whom I had now returned, desiring that he would send

me to him at Costnitz, where he was obliged to attend the *concilium*. I am to go with him to Italy to finish my studies at a university, and shall be eventually provided with a rich benefice through his patronage."

"He is a happy man," said Gerard, "who can boast of such holy consanguinity."

"And thus I left every thing behind me," continued the youth. "House and home, money and estate, are become the property of my little brother, Johannes, and I give it all up to him very willingly; for he is a dear little fellow, if he is now what he was before his mother sent him from home to be nursed, on account of his health. The altar will be henceforward my support; and the life of a lazy cenobite is not the worst in the world."

"By my troth, you have done right," exclaimed Gerard. "Once a canon, my brave boy, and all your cares will be over. The best table, and the most delicious wines, will be at your command. You will have no need to trouble yourself with the cure of souls. You will then only have to forget what you have learnt; and when lolling upon your silken couch, after a day's fatigue"—

"Shame on you!" said the young man, with a smile. "Is that the way you scandalize the priestly function?"

"Convict me of falsehood, if you can," exclaimed Gerard, in an earnest tone. "Obtain but possession of a superior benefice in the church, and you will soon discover that I have not scandalized her. Yet the priests in the country are not a whit better than the priests in town. One keeps his doxy in the house, another visits her out of it. The prebendary does not see his chair ten times in the year, and the bishop thinks he has achieved something superhuman, if he attends a consecration, and is present, on Easter-day, at high mass under a state canopy."

"It is but too true that disorders have crept into the church," replied his companion, "but the council has been appointed to do away with them. You will see"——

"That one crow will not pick out the eyes of another," said Gerard, interrupting him.

"Do you forget that his majesty, the emperor himself, took all possible pains to bring the council together? and that the eloquent preacher from Bohemia will there triumphantly defend his doctrine?"

“Triumphantly!” said Gerard, laughing. “Have you learnt so much, and still in the dark? How does the huntsman treat a snarling dog? He entices him with kind words, and when the brute is induced to approach, by a show of kindness, he applies a muzzle on his snout, and a cudgel to his back. As to the emperor, who drove through the country more like a jailor”——

“Silence!” slander not the emperor,” said the other, jocularly interrupting him. “My father said to me, upon taking leave, ‘Dagobert, I will give you my blessing, if I can only once see you invested with the dignities enjoyed by your ancestor, the celebrated Wicker Frosch, who was domestic chaplain, and the right hand of the great emperor, Charles the Fourth!’ Since, therefore, in order to attain this end, I must keep on friendly terms with the master of the Holy Roman Empire, I forbid your making any attack upon his majesty.”

“Well, in the name of Heaven!” rejoined Gerard, “let there be peace between us, and I recommend your most obedient servant, von Hülshofen, to your best attention when you become the great man’s chancellor.”

They now merrily pursued their journey, which offered nothing worthy of particular notice. Dagobert was impatient for adventures. Gerard looked with equal impatience for the female stranger; both, however, were disappointed. They were rapidly approaching the goal of their mutual wishes; but when they arrived within a few miles of Costnitz, they found that the roads were thronged with foot-passengers, horsemen, and carriages. A vast number of country people were carrying the produce of their industry to the town, which reminded our travellers of the humming and ferment of a beehive. All the inns and ale-houses overflowed with strangers chattering, singing, and blaspheming in all languages. Gerard had no objection to the motley crowd, so long as he found access to the cellar, but was greatly disappointed in his expectation that his youthful companion would not participate with him in his favourite pleasure. The light-hearted Dagobert became moody and silent in the midst of the delighted throng, and appeared grieved at the spectacle around him.

Gerard bantered him upon his melancholy, and besought him to be cheerful.

“Your exhortations,” replied Dagobert, “only increase my melancholy. Can I know that I am obliged to be a wanderer among strangers, without lamenting it? Never again shall I return to the house in which I was cradled; never shall I again behold the flowery fields in which I sported during childhood. The spite of a disappointed woman has thrown mountains and rivers between me and my native place! What can foreigners offer me, who neither understand my language, nor are acquainted with the feelings of my heart?”

“You attribute all your sorrow to absence from your native land,” said Gerard, quickly. “But may wine be my poison, if the remembrance of something dearer to you, which you have left behind, be not the chief cause of your rhapsodies!”

Dagobert’s cheeks became flushed; and, after a short pause, he said, “You are right. I never thought that a benevolent feeling, long and ardently cherished, could have so serious an issue. But,” continued he, regaining his complacency, “it is all folly and vexation. A man devoted to the church must dismiss such thoughts.”

"It is certainly hard," said Gerard, "to forget a pretty girl, who has captured the heart by the spell of her beauty; but once resolve to love every pretty face and figure you may meet with, and you burst at once the chain of the enchantress. Do this, and I shall receive your thanks for my advice."

Dagobert smiled. "That is just," said he, "what I most dreaded. Heaven has given me a heart softer than your brains, and my father is just like me; for in his sixtieth year, he wedded a young girl of eighteen. It is a cause of endless vexation to me, to think that I shall be unable to perform my plighted vows towards the idol of my soul; but this world has its balance of good and evil; he, therefore, that repines to-day may rejoice to-morrow. Look at this magnificent view of the town and lake of Constance. Who would not be cheered at such a sight, even were he under the deepest afflictions? Hark! the bells are ringing. They could not peal more merrily if you were the emperor, and I were riding by your side as your domestic chaplain!"

Dagobert then endeavoured to stifle the disagreeable feelings which had arisen in his

breast, although he was in no humour for jesting. Gerard courteously listened, and casting his eyes over the town, the lake, and the river, never noticed that the road led down a small declivity which was rendered slippery by the frost. Suddenly his horse made a false step, and it was only by Dagobert snatching quickly at the bridle of the stumbling Roland, that both horse and rider were saved from a serious fall. Gerard pulled up in alarm. "This comes," said he, "from listening to you and forgetting myself. This cursed declivity. It will be better for us—as the noon-day bells are ringing—to alight like Christians, take our caps under our arms, and lead our animals onward while we say our prayers."

"Be it so," rejoined Dagobert. "We may also as well strive to be at hand when that horseman, who is fumbling on before us, shall take it into his head to jump from his saddle.—He appears, like you, to be lost in thought, for his bridle is hanging loose, and who knows how soon"——

"The d—l!—there he goes!" exclaimed Gerard, interrupting himself in the prayer which he had just begun, when he and Dagobert ran

off as fast as they could, at the hazard of their legs or necks, for the horseman had just fallen to the ground, and his horse was rolling over him. The friends in need fastened the bridles of their horses to a beech-tree, and hastened to the succour of the dismounted traveller, whom they found some difficulty in dragging from under his prostrate steed. The horse was raised after considerable exertion, and stood without injury by the side of his master, who gradually recovered his senses. He continued, however, sitting upon the ground, and stared for a considerable time at his preservers.

"Praised be the Lord!" said he, at last, in a deep sonorous voice, as he rubbed his left leg. "Such a fall as this I never before experienced."

"Are you quite sound and well?" asked Dagobert anxiously. The stranger pursed up his brows; but when, after stretching out his limbs, he found that he had received no injury, a satisfied smile beamed upon his manly countenance.

"It has passed off very well," said he, as he wiped the cold perspiration from his forehead. "Lift me up, good people, I shall

be then able, with God's assistance, to stand alone." They did as he desired; when his stature appeared to be considerably above that of either of his assistants. The stranger now turned towards his horse, who trembled greatly, as if he already knew what was about to follow. "Gentlemen," said the dismounted rider, "you see here an animal which has for ten years carried me many a ride on business and pleasure, and which I had named 'Blessing,' because he was so steady and sure-footed. Is it not a shame that he should have thrown me off to-day by his laziness? Thou worthless brute!—our friendship ceases from this day: henceforth I ride thee no more."

"It is well for you if you have the choice of a numerous stud," observed Gerard, as he cast a look of contempt at the indifferent equipment of the rider: "The horse, however, has only been guilty of a brute's error. He is not a rational being."

"Good friends and faithful animals are true to the last!" replied the stranger, taking up the matter more seriously. "The friend in whose bosom I cannot repose confidence, and the horse who brings my life into danger—are no

longer of any value. This discarded servant may, therefore, henceforward live upon his retired allowance, but he will never again be restored to favour."

"You are a curious personage!" said Gerard, smiling, "and all this ado about a harmless tumble! Why, man, I would not sell my Roland for an empire, though he has frequently dismounted me, but never maliciously. If we do roll sometimes in the dust together, of what consequence is it so long as our ribs hold sound? You have met with nothing more nor less than what happened to the Holy Father not long since, whose carriage was overturned on his way to Costnitz."

A loud "hem!" was the stranger's only reply. He then seized the bridle of his horse and led him onward at an easy pace.

Dagobert having unfastened his own and companion's horses from the tree, all three walked towards the town, leading their respective steeds. Gerard, who could not control his merry humour, gave vent to some witty sallies upon the accident which had happened to the Holy Father.

"Learn to hold your tongue," retorted the

stranger, knitting his brows, "pass no jokes upon the head of the Christian church, or ——!"

He flung his left-hand glove, in token of defiance, before the astonished Gerard.

Hülshofen grasped his sword, but Dagobert was in an instant at his side, and whispered into his ear, "Do you wish to get us into mischief? Remember, we are within the precincts of the town. If you draw your sword you will be excommunicated."

Gerard, who was ready to strike, remembered the severe laws which had been put in force by the council, and after directing towards his challenger a look of haughty defiance, returned his sword into the scabbard. Dagobert placed himself before the stranger. "Be you who you may," said he to him, "I beg you will keep the peace. A joke must not be retaliated in blood : besides, it will serve his holiness very little for such insignificant people as we are to settle our differences with the sword. We are all strangers, moreover; why then should we sacrifice ourselves to the laws, when we are probably destined to engage in a nobler contest?"

"You are mistaken," rejoined the stranger, smiling, "if you think I have any desire to

enter into a personal contest with this man. By the mass! such an idea never entered my head. It would be little becoming in me to descend to such an encounter with one so much beneath my notice. I am exceedingly rejoiced, however, at this opportunity of making your acquaintance. Tell me your name, if you wish to be my friend."

Dagobert, amazed at this address, was about to ask him the same question, when a servant, in a white and red livery, advanced through the town gate, and, uncovering his head, stood still at the edge of the road. "Take this horse," said the stranger, "and lead him to the stable. For the future I shall only mount the gray."

The servant bowing respectfully, took the horse's bridle, when the gentleman, now within a few paces of the town wall, asked the young Franckforter, with a smile, to whom he was indebted for assistance in his late danger:

Dagobert modestly mentioned his own name, and at the same time acquainted him with Gerard's rank and family. "I have nothing to do with your companion," rejoined the stranger with some asperity; "he has cancelled the obligation due to the service which he

rendered me, by an uncalled-for provocation. You, however, worthy citizen, have engaged my esteem and good wishes. You will doubtless go to the Angel, as the elders who are deputed from your town always put up there? It will afford me pleasure to hear of you."

Saying this, he gave the two travellers a passing nod, and entered the town. They observed that the sentinels presented arms, and the citizens respectfully saluted him as he passed. "I fear," said Gerard, whispering into his companion's ear, "that I have done a foolish thing. This man is somebody more important than we gave him credit for."—"It is very possible," replied Dagobert, smiling, and referred him to the servant who was following his dismounted master into the town. "What is the name of your master, good fellow?" said Gerard, and was dumb with dismay when the latter replied, "It is His Highness Duke Frederick, of Austrian Tyrol."

CHAPTER III.

THE Jew's quarter, at Franckfort, which is situated between the river Maine and the Cathedral, was late on a Friday evening enveloped in its customary obscurity. The narrow irregular street exhibited no signs of that bustle and activity which enlivened it in the times of Lewis the Bavarian. The condition of the Jews, since those times, had undergone a material change, and, at Franckfort, they had been reduced to a few families, in consequence of severe persecutions. These families now led quite secluded lives, and endeavoured, by every possible expedient, to conceal from the Christian inhabitants of this free city every appearance of wealth, in order to evade their lawless rapacity. Their windows and doors were therefore kept closed on this day, and the ceremonies of the evening were performed

within four walls. The house of David Ben Joachim, the senior of their tribe, who was respected by the whole neighbourhood on account of his great age, his sufferings, and the vicissitudes he had experienced, formed no exception to this rule. It was outwardly as black and sombre as any other in the street; but such as were admitted within its walls on the Jewish sabbath were ushered into an elegantly furnished apartment, where the holy day was observed in sumptuous privacy. A quadrangular room, of considerable dimensions, decorated alternately with tapestry and richly-carved panels, formed the domestic temple. The floor was covered with a splendid carpet. A chandelier with seven branches was suspended from the ceiling, below which stood a round table overspread with a red cloth; and under this was a smaller one of beautiful white linen. Three chairs, with high gilded backs and arms, covered with the finest velvet, stood round the table, upon which were three silver goblets, richly chased, and placed on a silver salver. The silver ewer shone resplendent from a niche in the wall not far from the table, and the clearest water flowed into it upon turning a

golden cock fixed immediately above it. In the corner was a table loaded with the dishes served up on the festivals, and bearing the glittering wine-cup. A couch, with silken pillows, and covered with a costly counterpane, occupied the back part of the room. On this couch reposed Esther, the granddaughter of the master of the house, a maiden whose beauty was unrivalled. She was superbly dressed in the costume of her country; brilliant pendants hung from her ears, and many valuable rings adorned her fingers. She listened attentively to her venerable relative, who was sitting at her feet wrapped in a beautiful furred mantle, richly lined, while a velvet cap covered his silvery head. He had already numbered a hundred bitter years. As soon as the peaceful evening had set in, he was in the habit of entertaining his son and granddaughter with the record of past events, of the persecutions which their race had undergone, and thus laid before them the results of his experience. To-day, however, the charming Esther alone listened to him, for her father had not yet returned from an excursion which his avocations had rendered necessary. The servant was also away, and his

place behind the stove was occupied by dumb Margery, the sabbath-maid, who, yawning, and struggling to keep her eyes open, occasionally crept out of her corner to trim the lamps.

"It is impossible," said Joachim, "to forget such abominations as I have outlived. The pious Rabbi Simeon, my learned teacher, to whom he opened the gates of paradise, said to me on his death-bed, 'Boy, we are now living in easy captivity; but a time will come—happy am I that I shall not witness it—a time of the deepest tribulation to the sons of Israel. But cease not to pray to the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, that he will finally fulfil his promise, and send us the long-expected Messiah!' Alas! the prophecy of the pious rabbi has been fulfilled; we have tasted the bitter fruits of persecution, but the years which are to come with the Messiah are still lingering behind!"

"Tell me, dear grandfather," asked Esther, in a tone of great anxiety, "will the advent of the Messiah usher in a period of transcendent beatitude?"

"It will," replied the venerable man, whose eyes beamed with animation; "the days

of his coming will be glorious beyond conception. We shall again become like the sand on the sea-shore for multitude, and rule over all the nations of the earth. Jerusalem, restored to more than its original glory, will be the capital of the universe, and all that is born of woman will worship and offer up sacrifice in the temple. Thorns and thistles will no longer mix with the luxuriance of a universal and continued spring; the corn will rise in gigantic sheaves; the vines will produce prodigious clusters, and the rivers flow with milk and honey. 'The morning stars will sing together, and all the sons of God shout for joy as at the creation.' The sun will increase a hundred-fold the glories of the day, and the moon of the night. Paradise will be restored, and all the well-beloved 'sons of the circumcision' will rejoice before God."

"What a delightful prospect in the future!" exclaimed Esther, enraptured with the description; "oh! that it could be realized in the present!"

"The anger of the great Jehovah is stretched out still!" rejoined Joachim, bowing his head: "he hears not as yet the voices of his children, which they raise unto him out of the

deep. The Prince of Darkness still keeps our cry from reaching the ear of mercy, because it is not his pleasure that we should enter into the heavenly Canaan, whither our blessed forefathers have gone before. But our groanings will be finally heard by the beloved Gabriel, the messenger of mercy; and then the promised Lord of our salvation shall descend among us, his peculiar people, and exalt us to the honours of his eternal kingdom."

"Would that the period were arrived!" exclaimed Esther, with a sigh. "I have no pleasure in life; and I have often thought, no doubt sinfully, that it were better to be a Christian woman upon earth, than"——

"Girl, peril not your soul by such a horrible abomination! Why harbour a wish, which, if encouraged, must eventually exclude you from paradise?"

"Pardon me, grandfather!" said the lovely Esther, "but how especially sad is the mortal condition of the daughters of Israel! Our lives are like that of the solitary willow by the stagnant pool; while you, our sires and brethren, go out into the world, visit distant countries, see strange people, and enjoy pleasure in your

freedom. We, however, who are the weaker vessels, pass our days in melancholy seclusion. Though your goodness provides us with the delicacies which please our palate, and with the costly dresses which delight our taste—though you surround us with luxuries—of what use is all this to us, while social joys are banished from our homes? Behind bolts and bars, the luxurious board, and the soft couch from which we scarcely ever rise, cease to afford us delight. While shackled with cruel fetters, how can we enjoy such vain magnificence?"

"Misguided maiden!" exclaimed Joachim, with warmth. "You are indeed in fetters, but they are the fetters of vanity. Silly trifler! would you mingle in the impure dances of the uncircumcised, or join in their heathenish festivities? Please your father, and your husband when you have one—you will then do all that is needful. What do you require to know of the world beyond your home?"

Esther's countenance was covered with a crimson glow. She smiled in her confusion, then raised her large black eyes, beseeching reconciliation, and extended her hand. "You and my father alone will I seek to please," said she, in

a tone of tenderness, "and my husband, whenever Ben David shall choose one for me. But where is my father? The glass has completed the seventh hour. I trust no harm has happened to him!"

At this moment a slight knocking was heard at the house-door. The old servant lighted a hand-lamp, and took down the key from the wall. "Be considerate!" said Joachim to her, in a gentle whisper. "I will go with you, and see from the window who it is that knocks, for precaution is necessary."

The old woman walked with the lamp before her aged master, while Esther remained behind, with her hand upon her temples, absorbed in thought. "Ah!" said she, with a sigh, "my grandfather may talk, but the frost of a hundred years has so benumbed his faculties, that he cannot comprehend the feelings of youth. With all his exhortations, he will not convince me. One thing only is wanting to make me happy; but that, alas! I cannot attain!"

Her head sank upon her bosom. At this moment Joachim entered, with his son Ben David behind him, leading in a little boy.—The daughter sprang with joy into her father's

embrace, and anxiously inquired the cause of his long absence.

Ben David replied, that his young companion got on so tardily, that he had carried him for the last half-hour upon his back.

Esther directed a glance of eager curiosity towards the child, who was almost sinking to the ground with weariness, and was placed by Ben David on a seat near the stove. Old Joachim, however, who did not appear to be satisfied at what he witnessed, said, after a short pause, "I cannot pass a benediction upon your arrival, my son, for you have broken the sabbath, by doing that which is not lawful for thee to do on the Lord's day."

"Pious father!" rejoined Ben David. "If I have sinned in taking care of this child, who was about to perish with cold and hunger, I will willingly renounce my place at your table, lay on the bare ground, and fast, until you shall consider that I have fully expiated my transgression; only give orders that this boy may be provided with sufficient food and a warm bed."

"He is a child of Belial," said Joachim, in an austere tone, "and must not be harboured

among the sons of Jacob, but belongs to the abode of Esau."

Ben David repeated his humble entreaties that the boy might remain till the Sunday, when he would take him to his mother.

Esther seconded her father's solicitations by her own, and the old man finally permitted the boy to remain; but under the express condition that the Christian maid should feed him, and take him to rest in her chamber. Margery consequently took the child in her arms, and carried him away. Joachim gave his son the kiss of reconciliation, and having exhorted him to celebrate the sabbath in future in a more becoming manner, placed him at the table, when the venerable patriarch, having pronounced his blessing upon the bread, the wine, the salt, and the fish, the meal began, Ben David sitting with his head covered. Many anxious inquiries were made by old Joachim and Esther concerning the child, when Ben David declared that he had found him wandering a few miles from Franckfort; and as he appeared to be the offspring of respectable parents, he had taken compassion upon him, hoping at the same time to be rewarded with a considerable

present, if he could find out his father or mother, which he had no doubt of accomplishing, since he had learnt from the child that he belonged to the city.

The old man, who was an enemy to compassion, because it was an expensive virtue, but who never turned a deaf ear to any scheme of profit, commended his son's activity and foresight. At the same time he complained of Esther's dissatisfaction with her situation, and desired her father to make use of his authority to force her to dismiss such unbecoming sentiments from her mind.

Ben David, however, turning to Esther, said, "Be patient, my child, it may probably happen that I shall take you out with me into the world during the ensuing spring. I think of going towards Costnitz, where many great personages stand in need of me, and where we can appear in all that splendour which prudence forbids us to display here."

"What do I hear?" asked Joachim, with much concern. "As long as I remain in the land of the living, you shall not remove her from me. Who is to take care of me if you are both absent?"

"Give yourself no concern about that, father," replied Ben David. "The good servant Zodiah will serve you as if he were your son."

"Zodiah, do you say?" asked Joachim, doubtfully. "Zodiah, who pays so little respect to the laws of his fathers, that he has not been seen since our holy sabbath commenced."

"I thought he was already gone into his room!" replied Ben David, who was about to add something in commendation of Zodiah, when a frightful uproar was heard before the house, and knock after knock resounded from the door. Old Joachim and Esther were seized with alarm, apprehending some popular commotion, but Ben David, tranquillizing them in a few words, exhorted them to make fast the back doors, and conceal the jewels; then, following Margery down stairs, although not without some fluttering at his heart, he approached the entrance, before which the buzzing of a considerable crowd was heard. "Who is knocking so outrageously?" asked Ben David; when the reply came in a voice of lamentation: "Master! open the door, it is Zodiah, your servant! Open the door, I conjure you; suffer

me not to be treated with ignominy by the Edomites at your very threshold!" This speech was accompanied by hisses and ridicule from the crowd. Ben David, who could not be insensible to the peril in which his servant stood, ordered the maid to give him admittance. The bolts of the door were instantly drawn back, and scarcely had it begun to creak upon its hinges, when the rabble rushed into the house, and in the midst of them stood Zodiah, his face and garments besmeared with blood, which flowed in copious streams from a deep wound on his forehead.

Ben David drew back horror-struck at the sight, and raising both his hands towards heaven, exclaimed, "Zodiah! Has the Prince of Darkness obtained the mastery over thee, that thou shouldest thus enter the abodes of Israel, drunken and defiled?"

Zodiah made a hasty motion of denial, and sank down insensible upon the threshold of the lower room. Ben David cast an inquiring glance among the intruders, many of whom having just left their beds, appeared in their uncleanly night garments, and surrounded the wounded man like so many malignant witnesses

of the injuries he had sustained. "What has happened, my good friends?" said he, at length. He repeated the question several times without receiving any answer, until an elderly man, of decent appearance, pressed forward through the crowd, and said, "I will give you the information, Jew! My name is Albrecht—the smith at the corner of the street. I left my house a short time ago, and when scarcely twenty paces from my door, I stumbled over a person who was lying, as I supposed, drunk in the street. Upon putting the stump of a candle, which I carried in my hand, to his face, I immediately ascertained who he was. As soon as I touched him, he opened his eyes, and cried out, 'Let me alone! I am innocent!' It was easy to see that the fellow's ideas were confused, but he was not in liquor. Upon recognising me, he stated that he had been attacked in the Fishmarket, on his way home, by a number of men with painted faces, who, after having plundered him, wounded him with a hammer. Luckily, however, the blow having passed off in a slanting direction, he had escaped with his life, by falling to the ground, and affecting to be dead. As he requested to

be assisted to your house, I allowed him to take my arm, when the neighbours, hearing his lamentable cries, collected in a crowd."

When the smith concluded, a murmuring was heard among the bystanders, who regretted that the blow had not been fatal to the Jew. Ben David, impatient to put an end to this turbulent scene, thanked Albrecht for the assistance he had rendered, and opened the door of the room to admit his servant. The crowd instantly pressed into the apartment, and viewed with longing eyes the miserable articles which were scattered about upon the shelves. A few of the neighbouring Jews had also thronged into the room; they were as loquacious and busy as the rest of the crowd, and offered their services more from officiousness than from any desire of rendering assistance. It was in vain that Ben David begged them to leave the care of the wounded man to him: they stirred not a step. In vain he besought the Christians to quit the house: they would not depart, but with considerable importunity demanded their reward for having conducted the Jew-servant home. Ben David, who was not unaccustomed to such demands, promised that he would in-

demnify them on the Sunday, since he was forbidden by the law to touch money on the sabbath; but he thereby only aggravated the evil. "Hearken to the Jew!" said one of the intruders; "if he had to empty our pockets, he would care little about the law."—"On Sunday we have our sabbath," exclaimed another: "the Jewish dog must therefore pay us to-day."

It was in vain that Ben David endeavoured to represent to them the injustice of their demands. They only became the more clamorous, while some among them parloined whatever appeared of most value in the wretchedly-furnished apartment, and made off with it. The more violent, however, railed against the Jews, and menaced them with their clenched fists, while these latter made the best of their way out of the house, vociferating cries for help.

Their cries were heard by the chief justice of the Imperial City, who, accidentally riding through the streets, reached the scene of action just as Ben David was on the point of experiencing personal violence. The worthy magistrate, having learnt the cause of the tumult,

shrugged up his shoulders with an air of indifference, and said to Ben David, in a contemptuous tone, "What business had your servant at the Fishmarket so late? It is no wonder that he fell into the hands of assassins, who are now prowling about within the walls, as Andreas von Liebfrauenberg complained to me about an hour ago. He also was attacked by the villains, but liberated himself by the use of his knuckles, and some of the dogs received their dues. Such an act of intrepidity, however, is not to be expected from a Jew."

The mob raised a loud shout at this sarcasm; but the consequential functionary commanding silence, proceeded as follows:

"I order you, therefore, Jew, to keep your servant quietly at home; and for the disturbance you have this day occasioned I amerce you in the sum of five golden florins, which you must pay into the Exchequer, without fail, on Monday next. It is also proper that you should indemnify these worthy citizens, by giving each of them a groschen for having brought your servant home in safety, since humanity to a Jew well deserves to be paid for. On Sunday morning they will receive the money from you."

Ben David made a reverential bow, and kissed the hem of the great official's garment. "Allow me, mighty sir, to inform you," said he, in a most obsequious tone, "that the greater part of these people have already rewarded themselves by making off with my property."

"Can you name the persons who have done so?" asked the chief justice, sternly; and without waiting for a reply, added, "No, you cannot; and even if you could, you would only have yourself to blame. Why did you not give them something with a good grace, and keep a better watch upon your rags? Now, shut up your house, and keep yourself quiet. The least infringement of my orders shall cost you ten florins. Go home, good citizens! my worthy friends, good night!"

The horse wheeled suddenly round, and had nearly thrown poor Ben David into the mud. He nevertheless neglected not to make his last bow, and with a downcast countenance listened to the jeers of his Christian neighbours, as they departed from his door. Having ordered Margery to push forward the bolts and secure the lock, and to assist Zodiah into his chamber,

he returned with a heavy heart to Joachim and Esther, who had been listening with intense anxiety to all that had passed. They welcomed him with joy, while he, bowing his head in reverence before the table and the floating lights, exclaimed, "The storm of Esau is past. How beautiful are thy dwellings, O Israel! How delightful is thy temple, O Jchovah! thou art the joy and consolation of the faithful!"

The following morning, while the grandfather was still in bed, and Ben David performing the morning service, his blooming daughter crept to the room where Margery, the maid, was wont to pass her time during the festivals. The boy, whom her father had brought into the house, was still asleep upon the old woman's bed, while she was in attendance upon the sick Zodiah.

Esther approached the slumbering child, and bending over him, contemplated, with considerable interest, the traits of his innocent countenance. "I was not mistaken yesternight," said she, mentally, "when I thought I could trace some resemblance in these lineaments to those of another who is only too

dear to me. When I look upon those brown curled locks, those elevated eyebrows, that aquiline nose, and dimpling cheeks, I am almost tempted to believe his living image is before me, whom I shall never more behold. Sweet boy! I dare neither call you nor him, whom you accidentally so much resemble, mine. It is happy for you both that it is so, and miserable for me. Neither of you are destined to pass your days in misery. Liberty and honours await you, while I am a stranger to both. You will return to your disconsolate parents, and if they are rich, and reward my father handsomely for restoring their child, he will bless you. I bless you, however, because the sight of you has renewed those delightful dreams of happiness which I am destined never to see realized!"

Esther, looking tenderly on the child's countenance, passed her warm hand quickly over his forehead. The little drowsy fellow gently opened his eyes, like a smiling cherub, and looking in Esther's glowing countenance, said, "Gundel!" then stretched out his arms to embrace her. She drew back, however, when the boy perceived his error. He compressed his

lips together, concerned at his mistake, and his little hands fell down upon the counterpane. "You are not Gundel!" said he, in a plaintive tone. "Dear stranger, will you take me to my mother, and to my little Hans?"

"I should like to be a mother to you, dear child!" replied Esther, tenderly, "if I only dared to be so."

"Why dare you not?" asked the boy, somewhat assured by her gentle manner. "You are so good and kind, I would rather call you mother than the black woman, who will be constantly scolding me because I have strayed away from her."

"She cannot be your mother, then?" said Esther, pressing him to her bosom.

"Degraded girl!" said Joachim, who had entered softly, unheard by Esther. "Thank him, whom we name not, that the scion of a corrupt stock is about to be removed from thee. Thou art longing to mingle with the enemies of thy race; but the vengeance of the High and Holy One will overtake thee."

Esther placed her grandfather's hand upon her head, knelt down, and said, "Father, I offer up my daily thanks to the Eternal for having

permitted me to be a daughter of Sion. Mistake me not."

Joachim fixed his eyes sternly upon her, shook his head, and replied, "Thou pupil of the serpent! He above knows whether thou art speaking the truth. Thou art, however, disgracing the sabbath by tarrying here at the bedside of the Christian boy, whilst a son of Abraham, whom thou hast not yet visited in his affliction, is suffering in the house."

"Do you mean Zodia?" rejoined Esther, coldly. "Margery can nurse him. The law forbids me to attend the wounded on the day of God's rest."

"Zodia," added Joachim, "is a true believer, and this will heal his wounds without your assistance." He then conducted Esther into the room prepared for the solemnities of the day, notwithstanding her unwillingness to be separated from the crying child.

"What have you to say against the faithful Zodia?" asked Joachim; "tell me candidly."

"The sinner vexes me every time I see him," replied Esther, frankly; "his debauched appearance, his red hair, and crafty looks, are all extremely disagreeable to me."

“The law,” added Joachim, “commands you to love your brother, and to accustom yourself to like even the ugly, particularly if he is to be your husband ; and truly it is a wise command.”

Esther turned pale, but soon recovering herself, said with a confused smile, “You are jesting—Zodiah my husband ?”

“It was so settled,” replied Joachim, “between your father and his. When you were yet children, you joined hands, and said, Missal Tobh ! as our rabbins, of blessed memory, require those to say who are plighted to each other, Zodiah’s father is no more, peace to his memory ! But the contract must be kept, so long as Zodiah continues to be a man after God’s own heart. He has already served more than six years for you, and at the end of the seventh he will take you home to Worms, where our brethren are still groaning in their fetters.”

“If,” replied Esther, “what you declare be true, rest assured that although I may be compelled to marry a man who is odious to me, yet I will never love him.”

“An industrious man turns copper into gold, and a woman’s dislike into love,” said Joachim,

"You will get better acquainted with him, and the rest will follow."

Ben David entered the room at this moment. "I come from Zodiah," said he joyfully. "His wound is healing, God's blessing be upon him."

"Alas! I hear strange things, my father; tell me," said Esther, imploringly, "am I to marry Zodiah?"

Ben David cast a look of disapprobation at his father. "You have been told," said he, "too early of things which"——

"Will render me miserable," interrupted Esther, with tears in her eyes.

"Zodiah possesses a noble mind," observed Joachim.

"Say no more," said Ben David, interrupting him, "but let us enjoy in social good-humour, the pleasures of domestic retirement."

Joachim and his family spent the day in peace. Poor little Hans passed it upon the knees of dumb Margery. When the evening repast, however, was over, and all were about to retire to rest, Ben David took his daughter apart, and desired her to call secretly on the following

morning upon the wife of the Elder, Deither Trosch, and make known to her that Ben David had done her bidding, and was waiting for her to fix the time and place where it might be convenient for her to hear the account he had to render. After giving his daughter this commission, with the customary paternal kiss and benediction, he dismissed her.

CHAPTER IV.

"You are so negligent and lazy to-day," said the lady of the respectable Elder Diether Trosch to her waiting-maid, who was braiding her mistress's hair on the Sunday morning. "If I intended to go to church I must go in my dressing-gown. Tedious creature! what have you got into your head these last few days?"

Else was silent for a few moments, and sighed. Upon her mistress again betraying her impatience, however, she said, "Honoured lady! the blame of my doing nothing right rests with yourself; for you are become so irritable that I quite tremble when I approach you. I am afraid you are not well; your rosy cheeks have lost their colour, and your eyes appear frequently to be swimming in tears. Might I presume so far, I would advise you to consult the Jewish physician."

Margaret shook her head significantly. "Old Joseph," said she, "is a clever man, but his medicines cannot cure my malady."

"Why not?" asked the maid, "a Jew can do any thing. When his herbs are of no avail, he *charms* the disease away."

"Absurd!" exclaimed the mistress, "I will, however, ascertain if I am ill or not. I suspect my malady will turn out to be nothing more than a disquiet which disturbs my rest and occasions me uneasy dreams."

"Bad as well as good dreams come from God," said Else, with a devout sigh. "On that account he has endowed certain persons with the power of interpreting them. My mother's sister was admirably skilled in this mystery, and I learnt much from her when I dwelt under her roof, but I have certainly never carried the art so far as she did. A dream is a very serious thing, though evil dreams are not always attended with evil consequences. The slumberer's pain is frequently converted into waking joy. He who sees coffins in his sleep, generally makes an early and a happy marriage, while he who dreams of marriage, often,

instead of the wedding garment, requires a shroud."

"Well!" rejoined the lady, whose spirits were somewhat revived by what her maid had said, "in the story which I shall impart to you there is nothing about coffins, nor of joyful nuptials. Listen to me good Else! Behold! I fell asleep before midnight, and after many events had passed before me in my dreams, which I can no longer recollect, I beheld myself placed in a magnificent saloon, decorated for a splendid banquet. Every thing shone resplendent, and was polished like a looking-glass. Sweet-scented flowers diffused their odours over tables which were covered with cloths embroidered in gold and silver, while I, as if I were queen of the festival, was elevated upon a throne entirely imbedded in roses."

"Excellent!" exclaimed Else, "red roses are the emblems of happiness and youth."

"As I was sitting," continued the lady Margaret, "in ceremonious state, surrounded by a number of attendants dressed in costly attire, I cast my eye upon an immense mirror which was just opposite to me. I smiled at the reflection of my

face in the glass, and perceived, as I separated my lips, that I had a tooth in front formed of the finest gold, which reflected its brilliancy in my countenance in a manner that at once surprised and enchanted me. Whilst I was gazing with admiration at the novel sight, I received from the hands of a page a goblet set with the finest diamonds, and filled with Spanish wine. Scarcely had I put it to my mouth when the golden tooth, as if by some powerful and mysterious agency, became separated from the rest, and fell suddenly to the ground, with a noise which resembled the breaking of porcelain. I stooped to recover it, but the even floor of the saloon was suddenly converted into a miry waste, which, yawning like a whirlpool, ingulphed the golden treasure. My misery was indescribable, until a hand, stretched out of the foggy atmosphere around me, fixed a fine white tooth, which it held between the fingers, in the place of the one I had lost. You are pale, girl—speak—what do you think of this dream? But, stay, as I have disclosed to you so much, you had better hear me to the end. While my eye was following the lost jewel as it sank deeper and deeper into the gulf, and was visible

only like a distant star in the darkened firmament, the white tooth became alive in my mouth, and, suddenly changing into a gray snake, slid down upon my breast, forced its way into my heart, and put me to indescribable torture."

"Oh, desist, dear lady!" exclaimed Else, with painful trepidation, "this is indeed horrible! Hasten by prayer and pious sacrifices to avert the anger of heaven which is about to deprive you of a treasure, from the loss of which an evergnawing worm will spring and gnaw your heart."

"Fool!" exclaimed Margaret, "vex me not with your silly apprehensions. Interpretations of dreams are made up of falsehood and deceit; and if I hear of your practising this unlawful art any longer, in order to alarm the credulous, I will order the crier to remove you from the city!"

Else, who did not rightly comprehend why her lady's confidential tone was so suddenly converted into that of anger, packed up all her property; and in order not to lose her place by any contradiction, left her alone, without uttering another word. Margaret, after wandering about her chamber for some time, had just

thrown herself, in a distempered state of mind, into the large easy chair, when a stranger entered the room. Margaret could not avoid giving utterance to a cry of astonishment when she beheld a well-known female figure standing upon the threshold, in the costume of a Nassau peasant.

"Willhild!" exclaimed Margaret, in a half-subdued tone, and was about to hasten towards the woman, when a sudden tremour arrested her progress. "What has brought thee here again so quickly, thou messenger of ill?"

The stranger closed the door carefully behind her, then pushed forward the bolt, and approached the lady of the house in a confused but respectful manner. "Remain quiet in your chair," said she, slackening her step. "You are right; I am not the messenger of good tidings."

"Then what I have so long dreaded is about to be realized?" said Margaret despondingly, her bosom throbbing while she spoke—"He is dead?"—

Willhild nodded assent, when Margaret threw herself back into the chair, in bitter anguish, and covered her face with her hands. There is a sorrow which can neither be expressed by

words nor tears ; and such a sorrow overwhelmed Margaret's soul. Against such a sorrow she contended in the agonies of despair, for a bitter quarter of an hour, and the conqueror's laurel was her reward. Willhild stood before the mournful lady with downcast eyes, muttering her prayers, when the latter at once dropped her hands, and looking at the evil messenger with a pale countenance, which nevertheless preserved a perfect tranquillity, calmly said,

"Take courage, Willhild ; dry your tears. Follow my example. I knew what would happen"—and she thought of her dream. "Relate to me, however, how it occurred—spare me not."

"Alas ! good lady !" rejoined the old woman, with emotion ; "the saints well know that no care was omitted to preserve the dear child ; it was accident which deprived us of him."

"Nothing is accidental !" rejoined Margaret. "It was preordained that the boy should die, and I exonerate you from all blame."

"The day before yesterday," continued the peasant, and her voice faltered, "the little fellow was tolerably gay, but ere the following dawn—he was no more."

"Did he quit this world in much pain ?"

"Not so, noble lady. He was taken from us in his slumbers. I erected a cross to him yesterday."

"Was he then buried yesterday? Oh that warning dream! Little Johannes, thou art the golden jewel which has sunk into the dark gulf, leaving an eternal thorn in my breast.—But why this emotion?—He is dead and buried, and there is no recalling him now. I have one more question. You have paid proper attention to my last commands—you have kept silence?"

"I have been as silent as the grave! No human creature knows that the child is no longer with us."

"Let his death be for ever a secret to the world," said Margaret.

"His father, however, must know it," observed Willhild.

"Not for the present. You remember what I lately imparted to you in confidence, in case of my son's decease?"

"Perfectly."

"My husband, scarcely recovered from a severe illness, has not the least idea that little Johannes has even been indisposed. Still less would I wish him to be apprized of his death, if I suc-

ceed in the scheme of which I lately spoke to you—But the clergyman who buried the body—”

“If you will not scold me,” said Willhild, after a moment’s hesitation, “I would confess that, mindful of what you lately said to me, I told the priest of Wiesbaden that the boy was my own son.”

“Right!” exclaimed Margaret, with joy beaming in her countenance; “you shall be well rewarded for this, when the main business is in proper train.”

“No doubt,” rejoined Willhild, betraying some concern, “but I cannot rightly see how you will bring it about.”

“That is my business,” said the lady.

A gentle tap was now heard at the door. Margaret inquired, with some surprise, who disturbed her retirement. A soft voice replied, that the favour of a private audience was requested upon a matter of importance. Margaret made a sign to the old woman to withdraw into the antechamber; when, having opened the door, Ben David’s daughter entered. Her attire, however, presented a great contrast to that which she had displayed the preceding day. Instead of the flowing silken drapery,

embroidered in gold, decorated with fringe, and enclosed by a silver hoop,—a coarse soiled gown now enveloped her finely-formed figure, whose beautiful proportions were entirely hidden under their wretched covering. In short, she appeared like a woman of the lowest class of society. The disguise she had assumed, at once concealed her opulence from the eye of the envious, and her beauty from that of the voluptuary.

The elder's lady, annoyed at the interruption, petulently asked, what the girl wanted; but when the latter mentioned Ben David's mission, her countenance immediately assumed a more friendly expression, and her language became more kind. She rubbed her forehead, and said, after a moment's reflection, "Your father may come this very evening. I will send my maids from the house, and place a confidential person to watch the door. I shall expect him about seven o'clock; my husband returns at eight precisely, and must not find him here for all the world. Now depart."

Instead of departing, however, Margaret was not a little astonished at perceiving the maiden's eyes rivetted upon a picture which hung over her dressing-table. As the girl did not

stir, the indignant lady turned from her, and taking a few pence out of a leathern purse, presented them to Esther, desiring that she would take the money and her leave. Ben David's daughter, however, suddenly recollecting herself, blushed, and declined the offered benefaction. "Are you too proud, Jewess," said Margaret, irritated at her refusal, "to accept a reward, which, trifling as it may appear, many of your tribe would take a false oath to obtain."

"I know not," replied Esther, with some wariness, "whether a false oath is to be purchased with money, but you might better recompense me for the service I have rendered you, than by vile offerings of charity."

"How so?" asked Margaret, proudly.

"By kind words." But tell me, gracious lady, who is the rider in that picture, whose horse is treading a serpent under his hoof?"

"He is the champion of our church—his name Saint George."

"Saint George?" repeated Esther, concealing her emotion. "How happy you are in possessing such a picture! The painter must have seen the saint himself, for no mortal was ever like him."

"No Jew, you should have said," observed Margaret, with bitter scorn. "The painter found his best model among true believers, in my step-son." A deep blush pervaded her countenance, while she motioned Esther to depart.

The Jewish maiden surveyed her with astonishment, but obeying the imperious mandate, silently quitted her presence. She glided nimbly down the marble staircase, passed rapidly through the wide entrance-gate of the mansion, and flew across the hill, called the Liebfrauenberg, nor stopped until she arrived near the cathedral. How willingly would she have tarried before the expanded doors, to have cast her eyes into the house of God, which was filled with the odours of incense, in order to catch a glimpse of that holy champion whose picture she had so lately beheld. But the dread of ill-treatment hurried her away, and she dared only whisper to herself, "Is it possible—her step-son? His picture hanging in her chamber, is the pledge of a criminal attachment—love has united them." Her countenance glowed with shame at the injustice of her accusation. "Love did I say? Guilt has

united them, and to guilt the lord of my heart is a stranger."

Her father received her at the door of his dwelling, and acquainted her that he had already succeeded in discovering the parents of the Christian foundling. Esther anxiously inquired their name. Ben David gravely replied, "It is, perhaps, prudent that I should keep this a secret from you. Joachim has made known to me the strange interest you take in this boy. This folly must be repressed, for it does not become you to be favourably disposed towards the children of Amalek. My pious father insists upon my taking you to Worms, where there is a school, in which is taught the wisdom of the rabbins. He will willingly submit to the temporary loss of your society, in order to rescue you from the peril of evil communication.

"Carry me to my grave, rather than to Worms," said Esther with energy. "Worms is Zodiah's native town, and would be consequently to me a place of torment upon earth. If you insist, I must obey; and may God forgive you!"

She flew to her chamber, and shut herself up alone. Her father looked after her with a

sorrowful smile, then striking his breast, raised his eyes towards heaven, and said, with a sigh, "I do indeed forebode evil! May the everlasting Jehovah order all things for the best!"

He passed the day in his usual occupations—took an exact account of his concealed and other property, and towards evening dressed himself in his best attire; then taking the boy by the hand, conducted him to the house of the elder's family, where he arrived, as he had been ordered, precisely as the clock struck seven. Willhild was waiting for him at the door, and upon perceiving him ascending the outer steps with the child, made a sign for him to enter. He followed her through the solitary edifice as far as the antechamber of the noble matron, who immediately ordered him to be shown into her presence. Having delivered the boy to Willhild, he slowly entered the apartment of the elder's lady, who received him with hope and anxiety depicted on her countenance.

"What news do you bring me, David?" she asked. "The possibility which I mentioned to you lately is become a sad reality—my son is no more!"

"Alas!" said Ben David, participating in

her feelings, "then I pity the mother who is left behind! I pity you from my heart; for even we Jews know how dear our children are to us, and our sons above all. The Lord has already deprived me of two; one of them by a cruel death, the other——but His will be done!"

"But," rejoined Margaret, "it is because His will is unalterable, that it would be folly to consume our lives in fruitless sorrow. Heaven knows that I admit you not willingly to my secret confidence, but circumstances require it. —I was poor before I gave my hand to old Deither. My relations are still so. I am young, and would not have sacrificed my youth to an aged husband without some prospect of advantage. Providence did not require this, and my husband's only son, by the first marriage, is therefore to be devoted to the church. His daughter renounced her inheritance, and I bore a son, who thus became sole heir to all his father's property. As we had fears for the boy's health, we intrusted him to the care of a former servant of my family, who is married, and lives not far from Wiesbaden, ordering her to bathe the weakly child in the mineral waters of that place, according to the prescription of

the physician, Joseph. I learnt a few weeks since that he was ill. With the anxiety of a mother I tore myself from the bedside of my infirm husband, and hastened to my son. I was convinced, from the first moment I saw him, that his malady would be fatal, and returning home disconsolate, began to prepare my mind for the worst. But have you found a mother who, for a rich reward, would for ever renounce all claims to her child? or an orphan worthy to possess the noble inheritance with which I am prepared to invest him?"

"Noble lady," replied the Jew, "I have not found a mother who will sell her child, but I have found something better—a boy to whom no one makes claim—who knows not himself whence he came, and from whose parents you have nothing to dread, since they have discarded him."

Willhild now appeared with the boy, and nodded to the lady in a manner which bespoke perfect satisfaction with what had been done. Margaret looked at him earnestly, and exclaimed, while tears started into her eyes, "Indeed! if these traits be not marked by the finger of God, I know not what is! Had my

son been still alive and well—What a wonderful resemblance!—My poor Johannes!

“My name is Hans!” said the boy.

“A fresh hint from above!” rejoined Ben David. This child is named like your own, but his name has been probably abbreviated in his own village.”

“It is indeed extraordinary,” said Margaret, drying her tears, “every thing turns out better than could have been expected. Come, my boy, will you love me?”

She drew him towards her as she said this, and kissed his forehead: the child looked up in her face, played with the gold cross which hung round her neck, and asked her—“Who are you, good lady?”

“Your mother, to be sure!” replied Ben David, abruptly. The boy, however, gave a smile of incredulity, and shook his little head.

“That is your mother, and I am your nurse,” said Willhild. The child looked at her for a moment, and inquired doubtingly, “Where then is Gundel and little Hans?”

“Gundel is gone away, and will return no more,” said Ben David; “little Hans,” he

added, "is become black, because you have staid away so long," pointing to the small black lap-dog which was sleeping at Margaret's feet upon an elegant cushion.

The boy said in an under tone to the Jew, "She is not my mother."

"Urchin!" exclaimed the lady affecting anger, "will you immediately acknowledge me? This folly has already lasted too long. Speak if you do not wish to feel the rod, am I your mother or not?"

The boy became alarmed, folded his little hands, and hiding his head in the lady's lap, cried out, "Dear mother, do not beat me. Hans will be good—he knows you are his mother—only do not beat him."

"Well, I am satisfied," replied Margaret, at the same time giving him a cake as a pledge of reconciliation, "only continue to be good and you shall also see your father."

"My father? I have none," said the boy.

"Oh, yes, yes, my little dear," replied Ben David, "a good and kind father, who will love you, make you rich presents, and bring you up to be a great man."

"What a fine thing to have a mother and father too who will not beat me!" exclaimed Hans in ecstasy as he sat down upon the little dog's cushion. While he and the dog were playing and consuming the cake together, Ben David followed Margaret into an inner chamber, where the conditions of the sale were settled. These were not trifling, for as Ben David was going away, the lady said to him, "You understand, Jew, how to traffic to your own advantage. Dealing in children I take to be a very profitable trade."

"What do you mean, noble lady?" asked Ben David with an hypocritical smile, "Children are God's blessings, and we can never prize them too dearly; least of all when we gain an inheritance by them. The son by the first marriage is to become a priest, and will therefore never obtain a dispensation to continue the race in default of other heirs. The boy which I give over to you is consequently a cheap purchase as the remedy for so great an evil, for you will certainly never have another son by your aged husband."

"Yet dare I expect from you the most pro-

found silence?" asked Margaret, fixing a penetrating look upon the Jew, "if you should prove faithless"

"Be easy on that point, good lady," replied Ben David with a smile. "As a Jew I dare not take an oath but upon the holy book, and then even you must first believe me upon my word whether I have sworn right or not; for, although I understand your German, you do not comprehend my Hebrew. Rely upon a sure pledge—my neck. At least my life would be in jeopardy were it known that I had sold a Christian child: and my life, although it is only a Jew's life, is still dear to me. Assure yourself of the woman's fidelity who is privy to the transaction."

Saying this, Ben David made a quick retreat, and Margaret neglected not to take the hint he had given her to secure the silence of Willhild.

"You may most safely trust me, good lady!" rejoined the old woman, "but could I only be sure it were no sin to ingraft an unknown branch upon such a noble stock."

If I consider it no sin," replied Margaret haughtily, "I think you need not."

"This is all very well, my dear lady," replied

Willhild, "for you people of condition. If you fall now and then into accidental sin, you can purchase an indulgence; but we poor people have no means of doing this. Besides, our priest at Wiesbaden is an austere man, who fears God, and next Easter I must confess to him the whole transaction."

"Give yourself no uneasiness on this head," replied Margaret, "when Easter arrives, say you have some business at Franckfort, and be shrived by my Confessor, the good Carmelite Reinhold. This worthy priest never inquires names and similar particulars, and will the more readily give you absolution, because you can swear that, by the transfer, you have rendered an unfortunate child happy."

"Then let it be so in God's name," said Willhild, who, placing her hand upon the crucifix which Margaret held before her, swore by all the saints in the calendar that she would never betray her.

They both began now to consult how the boy should be introduced into the house of his new parents. Before, however, the consultation had arrived at a satisfactory conclusion, the elder's footsteps were heard. Margaret sprang up, and

exclaimed, "There is no time for delay—our decision must be prompt. Welcome, Johannes Frosch ! you shall see your father."

She pressed the boy to her breast, and consigned him to Willhild, who took him into an adjoining apartment. She now quickly dried her tears, and waited her husband's entrance with apparent good humour, although with concealed alarm.

"Good evening, Margaret !" said Diether, approaching her in a merry mood from the effects of the wine he had taken, and embracing her, "What pleasure it gives me to see you thus. Your late continued melancholy had occasioned me much anxiety ; but now that your lovely countenance is all radiant with smiles, my heart is in ecstasies."

He kissed her tenderly. "Come, let us have a chat," continued he, drawing her to a cushioned seat. "A glass of good Rhenish has rejoiced my heart, and intelligence has reached me from my son Dagobert, who is arrived well and happy at Costnitz. Are you not rejoiced at this as well as myself?"

"From the bottom of my heart," rejoined Margaret.

Diether assured her that this information had imparted a particularly fine flavour to his wine. "One serious consideration, however," said he, "obtruded itself upon my joys; it was, that we have not one of the three children who are dear to us under our own eyes. Of my daughter I will say nothing, for she quitted us of her own accord. Her brother, too, is away upon the duties of his profession; but our Johannes, who is the dearest to me of all my children, because you are his mother, is at a distance from us, without our being enabled to nurse him in his infirm state."

"You would like to have him then again near you?" asked Margaret, smiling. "He has grown very strong, for Willhild sent me an account of him only yesterday. He has greatly improved in health since I saw him."

"Has he?" exclaimed Diether; "thank Heaven! I often said so. A good tree bears good fruit. If he were only so far re-established that he might return to his father's house"——

"Who knows but that may very soon happen?" said Margaret.

"Soon, do you say?" rejoined Diether, whose eyes sparkled with delight. "Wife, do you

really know when he may return? Tell me—Oh that I could once more have him in my arms! How willingly would I let him scratch my beard—how happy should I be to dandle him on my knees all the day long!”

Margaret adroitly availed herself of the joyful emotion which animated the old man, and opening the side-door, placed the wondering boy in his arms. “Here is your son,” she said.

The astonished elder stammered out, “What! my little Johannes?” then pressed the boy with rapture to his bosom, kissed him again and again, danced with him about the room, and conducted himself as if joy had deprived him of his reason. He at last placed him on the ground, and contemplated him for some moments with astonishment.

“What a change,” said he, “has a few months made in the child! What improvement in his form and features! Ay—so should a scion of our old stock always appear—a strong, vigorous sprout! But why are you so strange towards your father? You look upon me with astonishment, as if you had never seen me before! What ails the boy?”

“Embrace your father, Hans!” said Marga-

ret, sharply. The boy cast a fearful look at her, hung round Diether's neck, and imprinted a hearty kiss upon his lips. "Welcome, father!" said he, "take care of little Hans!"

The kiss set every thing to rights. Diether caressed and played with him before the looking-glass, and said, in a self-satisfied tone, "I could almost declare what the nurse observed to be true, when she laid the new-born infant in my arms; he is certainly like, very like me. Are not that nose and mouth my own?—and those eyes? The very counterpart of myself."

Margaret and Willhild confirmed the opinion of the good old man, while he pointed exultingly at the boy, who was playing with his scanty gray locks. Margaret, however, checked her husband's vainglorious garrulity, by stopping his mouth with a kiss.

CHAPTER V.

DAGOBERT'S avocations were directly the reverse of Gerard's. The latter sojourned at the Angel Inn, passing his time with the greatest *sang-froid*, in drinking and gambling, and only waited for an opportunity of engaging in some affray, or distinguishing himself in a tournament, as champion of the imperial city of Franckfort. Dagobert, on the contrary, employed the first days of his stay at Costnitz in visiting the churches, examining the curiosities of the town, and in seeking after his uncle, who had promised to attend the conclave in the retinue of Pope John. He made every possible inquiry both among churchmen and laymen, but in vain—no one could give him the least information respecting the venerable abbot, Jerome Frosch. Dagobert was beginning to relax in his inquiries, when a servant of Duke Frederick of Austria

came to summon him into his master's presence. He dressed himself in his best attire, and hastened to the ducal palace. The duke received him in a large plain room. "How do you like Costnitz?" asked his highness, good-humouredly. "What do you think of the motley multitude collected here, who look more like the followers of an annual fair, than a sacred meeting assembled to discuss the interests of the church?"

Dagobert acknowledged that he had hitherto made little progress in getting acquainted with the swarm of strangers around him.

"I am greatly surprised at that, at your age," said the duke. "By heavens! when I think how I passed my days at your time of life! Where the best sport was going on, I was always to be found in the midst of it, and was never happier than when clever people and fools swarmed around me. But take care of yourself: there are many pretty women in this town, though the greater part of them are birds of passage, who spread out their deceitful plumage here, because it has lost its value at home."

"Your highness mistakes me greatly," replied Dagobert, in a merry tone. "I am not in search of any blooming damsel, but of a gray-bearded

old man, who has summoned me hither, and is now concealing himself from me;—I am in search of my uncle.”

“Your uncle! Pray what is his name?”

“Jerome Frosch.”

“Is he the abbot of St. Bartholomew’s convent at Cesena?”

“The same, your highness. He is my father’s brother.”

“Oh! he is here,” said the duke, smiling, “he came with me when I accompanied the holy father hither.”

Dagobert was astonished.

“You may take the word of a prince,” continued the duke, “that what I tell you is true. Apartments were prepared for him at the Peacock, in Paradise Street; you have been inquiring for him probably by a wrong name; your uncle is no longer known by the ill-sounding cognomen of Frosch. He has translated it into Italian, and if you inquire for the most respectable Monsignore Ranocchia,* you will not fail to discover him.”

* Frosch and Ranocchia signify, in German and Italian respectively, Frog.

"What!" exclaimed Dagobert, "is my uncle ashamed of our honoured name, which has been rendered illustrious by one of the family having been domestic chaplain to the Emperor Charles the Fourth?"

The duke shrugged up his shoulders. "I have never known your father's brother as a German," said he. "I have always looked upon him as an Italian. But we know not nowadays who is German and who not. Who would know his native country among such a medley of Italian, English, and Bohemian gossips? Every nation but ours puts itself foremost, especially the French. They are a cunning people; they sing higher notes than are set down for them; they read different from what they write, speak quite in direct opposition to their feelings, and will certainly throw us into the back-ground by means of their learned chancellor, Gerson. Ay," added he, in a tone of sarcasm, "this council is the little masterpiece of the Luxemburger!"

The duke walked up and down the apartment for a few moments, then turned suddenly towards Dagobert—

"You now know, young man," said he

"where you may find your uncle. He will be glad to see you. Do me the favour to accept as a present the horse which you will find in your stable when you return to your inn; it is of Polish breed, and just wild enough for a lively youth like yourself."

Dagobert was about to offer his most humble thanks, but the duke interrupted him on the instant by adding, with a smile,

"Say not a word; were I an emperor, you should have received something better worth your acceptance. The attachment I feel towards you would have induced me to make you a more suitable acknowledgment, but it is my pleasure to remain your debtor. Go, and return soon. You are always welcome, so long as you come without that insolent agonistes."

The duke, maintaining an erect carriage in the middle of the apartment, courteously dismissed his young friend. Dagobert lost no time in seeking the abode of his uncle. Paradise Street was soon found, and as the Peacock was the largest house in the street, it was as quickly discovered. The door was open, and Dagobert was informed by a lazy servant, who was cracking nuts in the doorway, that Monsignore

was just returned from mass, but was devoting an hour or so to his own comfort, and had therefore given orders that he should not be disturbed.

"I am the abbot's nephew," said Dagobert, "and expect to be admitted forthwith."

On hearing this, the servant, who was an Italian, and spoke barbarous German, became somewhat more respectful, and conducted the visiter across the court-yard. Dagobert then turned his back upon his lazy conductor, and ascending the stairs by the kitchen, touched the bell of the abbot's room. The door was immediately opened, when Dagobert beheld the round plump countenance of a maiden, instead of the long grave face of a cenobite. The maiden's features bore the stamp of kindness, with the exception of a certain arch expression between the eyebrows, which seemed to say, "What dost thou want at this hour, thou peace-disturber?" This look, however, disappeared as soon as the girl ascertained that an elegant young man was inquiring after the abbot.

Dagobert remarked in the meantime the change in the maiden's countenance, and pro-

ceeded with greater animation. "I almost fear that the knavish porter has directed me to the wrong door, for I was only seeking a man, but have found an angel."

The girl smiled, but without taking further notice of this flattery, asked, in broken German, "What is your business? Monsignore is not to be spoken with at this hour. I will execute your commission as well as I am able."

Dagobert shook his head, smiling at the unusual circumstance of a female door-keeper to a priest, and replied, in a jocular tone, "My dear, that will not do. However, if a name of importance is necessary in order to procure my admission, mention to the holy father, that the Duke of Austria has sent me hither."

The girl, making a low courtesy, and promising to announce the visiter, went into an adjoining apartment. Dagobert, to whom this scene afforded much amusement, took possession of the small anteroom, in which stood an altar of the holy mother, decorated with gold and silver flowers, and perfumed by an unusually sweet odour of incense, which seemed to proceed from the abbot's chamber.

The maiden now returned, and pointing to the door of the holy man's apartment, courteously invited Dagobert to enter. He waited not for a second invitation, but leaving the fair one behind him in the anteroom, entered his uncle's chamber. He could scarcely, however, believe his eyes.: the floor was covered with costly carpets; the walls were hung with the richest tapestry. Superbly-cushioned chairs invited to repose, while green window-blinds softened the intruding daylight. The eye was dazzled by the numerous articles of plate which loaded an extensive side-board, whilst a round table, already laid out for dinner, and decorated with a costly service, beside which stood a magnificent cooling vase, promised an entertainment of the most sumptuous dishes, and the choicest wines. Singing-birds of the rarest species warbled their merry notes in golden cages, suspended from the ceiling, while the possessor of all this magnificence reclined upon a gorgeous couch.

Dagobert had leisure to consider his uncle attentively, before the latter raised himself from his downy pillows, without, at the same time, entirely quitting his reclining posture. His

countenance was no longer that of a pale Augustin monk, with hollow downcast eyes, such as Dagobert remembered it in his childhood. Time had converted him into a corpulent friar, who wore nothing of the priest about him except a cross of topazes and gold. His hair hung upon his shoulders, and that portion of it which was gray, had been coloured a dark brown. His eyelids were also tinted, while his ears were adorned with gold pendants. Rows of costly rings glittered upon his fingers. The rotundity of his countenance contributed greatly to hide the gentle ravages of years, while both his eyes and mouth had assumed an expression of presumptuous pride, which left no trace of his former monastic humility. The holy man asked his visiter, in an imperious tone, "What had brought him thither."

"Reverend father!" replied Dagobert, under the influence of powerful emotions, "the duke's command has not brought me hither, but my own heart, and that alone!"

The abbot surveyed him with astonishment. "What have I to do with your heart, when I am not acquainted with your face?"

"Is it necessary for me to mention my name,"

said Dagobert, warmly. "Do not these well-known features speak to your feelings?"

"Hey!" replied the abbot, taking his spectacles out of the case, "you do not mean——? Who has sent you?—— What is your mother's name?"

"The noble lady lies in her grave," said Dagobert.

"Enough, enough, child!" replied his uncle, interrupting him, whilst he bent his eyes upon the ground, and offered him his hand to kiss. "You bring me bad news. Is Rechinald dead? May Heaven receive her soul! But what do you require of me? I shall find a difficulty in providing for you. We poor priests are oppressed and taxed in these hard times as if we were the sole possessors of this world's treasures. I shall really be unable to do any thing for you."

Dagobert looked at the man of God, without knowing whether he was in earnest or in jest, but said, after a pause, "I have never known a female of the name of Rechinald: my mother's name was Wallrade, and so is my sister's also. I do not, however, most reverend uncle, appear before you as an importunate beggar, but at

your express desire! My father and step-mother send their best remembrances to you. If you will serve me in my profession, I shall thank you for so doing from my heart; but if you have changed your mind, I shall return immediately to Franckfort, without bearing you the least ill-will."

A degree of joy animated the abbot's countenance, as Dagobert concluded. He scanned his nephew's features for a moment, and then offering him both his hands, exclaimed, "Ah! that is indeed quite a different thing! Come, embrace your old uncle!"

Dagobert embraced him warmly, and at the holy man's request, placed himself by his side upon the couch. "Yes," said Jerome, "this is precisely my brother's countenance! Alas for these dim eyes! Forgive me, dear nephew, the mistake I made. You have an extraordinary way, however, of introducing yourself. I would have sworn—— Do you see—— this—She was my pious penitent when I lived in Germany; and —— her son—— but I will tell you at a more convenient opportunity. Give me your hand; you are, indeed grown a handsome lad. But you look as if you were going

to ride to court in the service of the emperor; instead of to St. Bartholomew's convent in Italy."

"Pardon me, uncle," said Dagobert, pulling playfully at the blue damask upper garment of the abbot, "but is this a conventual habit?"

"Oh!" said the uncle, with an arch smile, "the regulations of the cloister are not for churchmen of my condition. We who have advanced from the lower grades to the higher, may be allowed some liberty, at my time of life, especially in a foreign country too, and with the pope's dispensation."

"In a foreign country? Why, my dear uncle, this is your native land."

"Empty sciolist!" rejoined the abbot, knitting his brows, "where is the priest's native land? Wherever the vicar of Christ lives and rules with the princes of his church. Were it not so, it were only necessary to have placed one's foot in the paradisiacal land of Italy in order to desire no other home. In fact, had not my duty summoned me hither, I would never have returned among the barbarous Germans. A warm and delightful climate salutes you on the other side of the Alps, whilst in

this melancholy wintry atmosphere I am constantly choked with asthma and catarrh. There I walk through the spacious streets of magnificent cities—here through the narrow lanes of wretched beggarly towns. There I drink costly wines of the purest quality, which invigorate whilst they animate the frame, and eat the finest fruits. Here I am disgusted with your horrible Rhenish, which you praise because it is the produce of your own soil, and is as rough and as chilling as your manners; while my taste is vitiated with crab-apples and sour grapes. There I hear a language spoken which sounds like music, and songs resembling those of angels. Here I am deafened with your German peacocks crowing, and am forced to listen to your harsh airs, which are as discordant as the creaking of a door that has been left to rust upon its hinges. I will say nothing of your vulgar manners, your vile cookery, and your nasty custom of tippling; of your comfortless dwellings, in which one is stowed like a peasant in his mud-hut, and must throw a whole forest into the stove to prevent one's fingers from freezing. I will say nothing of your rapacity, and the wretched education of

your children, for you have a whole legion of these and other deformities. One thing I give you to understand, and that is, if you wish really to please me, and make yourself worthy of my favour, you must shake off your coarse German habits, and put on a becoming priestly deportment."

"Hem!" rejoined Dagobert, in a merry mood, "the latter is easily done, for the tailor gets a churchman's suit ready in one day; but the former part of your orders are not so easily complied with. The customs of my native country have so grown into my affections, that I should have trouble enough to root them out."

This conversation was now put an end to by the abbot inviting his nephew to dinner, promising him at the same time no luxurious meal, but the simple fare of a servant of the church, the head of which styles himself the servant of servants.

The pretty female door-keeper, whose curiosity had been wrought up to the highest pitch by this protracted visit, now peeped into the room. "We have a guest," said the abbot to her, with a familiar nod of the head; "this

young man, worthy Florilla, whom I present to you, is my beloved nephew."

Florilla looked for some moments with astonishment at the youth, who had so quickly become a relation of the holy man; then, in obedience to the intimation she had received, laid a plate and napkin, and placing a beautiful cut-glass goblet on the table for the use of the guest, withdrew to give orders for serving up the repast. Dagobert now endeavoured to appear quite at his ease, and asked the abbot, with the most perfect self-possession, whether Florilla were a relation or a maid-servant. Jerome replied, after some hesitation, "This girl is neither a relation nor a servant, but a daughter of a noble house, and was born at Cesena. She has gained my paternal regard by the particular confidence she has reposed in me. As she is an unprotected orphan, I allowed her, by way of satisfying her curiosity to see the world, to accompany me hither, where she has undertaken to superintend my little establishment; but as people are apt to impute sin even to the purest and most Platonic intimacies, she passes for my cousin."

"Although I am not at all unwilling," said

Dagobert, "to look upon so pretty a maiden as my relation, yet I cannot clearly understand how a man of your sanctity can condescend to sanction a falsehood."

"Ah ! you know not," said the uncle, with a sigh, "how the world delights in vexation, and the Germans particularly. Who subjects the priest's life to the most unchristianlike scrutiny?—The German ! Who dares to inquire into the domestic lives of abbots, bishops, cardinals, and even of the infallible pope himself?—The German ! Who makes the loudest outcries for a general reform of the church?—The German ! Alas ! for the sins of men ! It is the German who, notwithstanding his own libertinage, his impure dances, and odious metaphysics, wants to overthrow the maxims of our good mother church, as if they were the work of man, and not the most perfect monument of God and of his son."

The conversation, which was becoming serious, was now put an end to by the repast being served up.

While at table, which was covered with various dishes and wines that would have done honour to an archbishop, Dagobert could not

but perceive that his uncle bore Florilla very great friendship. She placed the greatest dainties before the holy man, while he returned part of them into her plate. He filled his own and his nephew's glass half with wine and half with water, while Florilla's sparkled with the purest growth of Italy. The Venetian fruits, which were served up, were first tasted by the master of the house, and then presented to Florilla, who, at length, declaring herself satisfied, bestowed a kind of sarcastic compassion upon the guest who had not partaken of any of the dainties. Dagobert shrugged up his shoulders and smiled, but his uncle dryly said, "My nephew thinks nothing of these rarities; he is a true German, and would at any time prefer an ox's tail to an ortolan, and would rather sit at the board of a dirty inn than even at the table of Cardinal Zabrella, who has some respect for good eating."

"Every thing is as it ought to be," replied Dagobert; "coarse fare produces coarse people." "Right," said the abbot, "and elegance in eating distinguishes the elegant man."

"It surprises me, reverend sir!" said Florilla,

"that you seem disposed to blame your nephew for what you commend in your niece."

"In you, my little cousin?" asked Dagobert, gaily, as he cast an animated look at Florilla, notwithstanding the jealous glances of his uncle.

"Not so," replied Florilla, with a blush, "I speak of the niece of his reverence." Monsignore here frowned upon his prattling friend as a hint to be silent, but it did not escape Dagobert, who summoned sufficient courage to make further inquiries.

"Are you then not the niece, my dear cousin?" he asked,— "or—what other niece, uncle?"

"What other do you think of than your sister?" asked the latter illhumouredly.

"Wallrade?" enquired Dagobert.

"To be sure, of her," rejoined Florilla.— "What do you think, reverend sir? Will it not give her great joy to see her brother, who appears to be just as courageous and determined as she is?"

"What!" asked Dagobert, "is Wallrade here, then?"

"Yes," replied Florilla, without hesitation: "did you not know it?"

"Troublesome chatterer!" exclaimed the abbot, in anger: "*Mulier taceat in ecclesiam!*"

"*In ecclesia!*" said Dagobert, smiling, and correcting his uncle's latinity: "but I do not understand why you wish to make a secret to me of my sister's presence, good uncle. To me Wallrade is the most indifferent person in the world; she neither excites my love nor my hatred. We could not bear each other from our earliest youth. I was too merry for her—she was too coarse for me. We should be estranged from each other if we lived even under the same roof."

"I know that very well," rejoined the abbot; "but I nevertheless hoped to effect a reconciliation between you, even before you should know of each other's presence here. My good intentions, however, have been frustrated by Florilla Cicalonilla."

"It is not my fault," said the maiden, pouting. "I knew nothing of the sister's repugnance, nor of the intended reconciliation. I would wager, however," added she, casting a stolen glance at Dagobert, "that your nephew's

good heart would soon suggest to him the way of once more uniting those bonds which accident or prejudice have sundered."

"I must decline the honour you intend to do me," replied Dagobert, courteously. "I am not the man to subject myself to a woman's caprices—not to a sister's, certainly—nay, not even to those of a beloved wife."

"Stay," said the abbot, interrupting him, "you ought not even to think, much more to speak, of a wife, which you can never possess."

"Well, then," rejoined Dagobert, laughing, "if I am forbidden to love, I may at least be allowed to entertain friendship. May I not, cousin?"

"Florilla smiled and nodded. Dagobert took up his glass—"Here's to our better friendship, then!" said he, and touched glasses with Florilla.—"Nay, uncle! we Germans must pledge our familiars, whether in peace or war. We will be good friends, cousin Florilla, I warrant me: but I shall not submit even to *your* humours."

Florilla raised the glass to her lips—her animated eye reposing the while upon the young man's blooming countenance. The abbot

moved his chair, and held up his finger menacingly. The light-hearted girl smiled; but Dagobert appeared not to notice the action, and proceeded—"Good uncle, you have still to explain why Wallrade is in Costnitz?"

"She came to visit me," replied the abbot. "A step-mother has driven you both from your paternal home, and I consider it my duty to supply the place of a father to you. Six years ago, when I left Wallrade an estate in Thuringen, which had fallen to me by right of inheritance, I made her independent, only reserving to myself the right of choosing her a husband; which right it is my intention now to exercise."

"What is the name of the happy man whom you have chosen for the sweet creature?" said Dagobert, laughing.

"I have a visit to make," said the abbot, taking no notice of the question, "at which I must dispense with your presence. I shall be glad to see you again, but in a more becoming attire."

"Depend upon that," replied the nephew; "I love to please you, and would willingly be always near you."

"I believe it," replied the uncle, glancing obliquely at Florilla. "You will, however, understand, that I can offer you no shelter under my roof; the regard which I have for this dear young lady's honour forbids it."

"Oh!" said Dagobert, "there will be no difficulty about that, when I have once assumed the cassock. I shall therefore plague my tailor to death until he has made me a sanctified fellow, which will be my sufficient passport through the gates of that paradise, where you will be the presiding divinity, and this (pointing to Florilla) the brightest angel. God preserve you, reverend uncle! I beseech your dreams, sweet cousin!"

Dagobert, who was a little excited by his uncle's Italian wine, took his leave; and Florilla having accompanied him to the door of the anteroom, he thought he would commence his approaches to her heart by a preliminary squeeze of her hand; but upon hearing the abbot's voice, Florilla softly whispered, "*Addio carino!*" and flew back into the dining-room.

"What a madcap has my brother sent me!" said the abbot, thrusting his hands into a

capacious fob in his waistband. "He is as impudent and presuming as a Frenchman; as complete a toper, and as coarse, as any true German. The fool wants to be a priest too!"

"Not he! but he will be one, nevertheless," rejoined Florilla.

"Right; he will!" added Monsignore:—"God preserve us! he will prove, I fear me, but a dull church luminary."

"That will be no novelty!" said Florilla, tittering, while she fed the lap-dog with bread and honey.

CHAPTER VI.

THE conclave at Costnitz was the most brilliant ever known, although the Emperor Sigismund still remained in Aix la Chapelle, at which city he had been just crowned. The interest taken by the whole of Europe in this celebrated congress was immense, because every one felt convinced of the necessity of reform. The Roman church, convulsed by the most violent dissensions, possessed three vicars of Christ instead of one; who, being chosen by parties mutually hostile, adopted the enmities of their supporters, and thus gave great scandal to the church. They admitted within her sacred pale the most disgraceful disorders, looking with an eye of indifference upon the decline of morals among the priests, partly because they were too weak to oppose them, partly in order to gain them over

to their views, and partly because the priests were not more dissolute than themselves.

Neither John the Twenty-third, the most crafty among the papal tyrants, nor the proud Benedict the Twelfth, who reckoned upon the protection of the King of Arragon, nor the pliant Gregory the Twelfth, who had submitted to become the tool of his own party, were to be moved to an honest co-operation in a reform of the church. The clamour raised throughout Germany against ecclesiastical abuses, was not sufficient to rouse the emperor from his apathy. Various circumstances, the forerunners of very important events, contributed at length to give a spur to his activity; such as the intrigues of Huss in Bohemia, and the gradually swelling tide of Turkish power. By unremitting exertions, and by making great personal sacrifices, Sigismund, in conjunction with John, at length assembled the long-desired council at Costnitz, for general consultation upon church affairs. Pope John, resting upon the validity of his election, appeared in person. Distinguished princes, attended by a numerous retinue, together with an immense number of priests of all grades, swelled the vast assemblage; to say nothing of the prodigious con-

course of persons, attracted by their fondness for sights, or the mere love of mischief. The attention of all was fixed upon the emperor, who was to open the sittings in person; and as his arrival was delayed from week to week, curiosity sought its relief in other objects. There was one man in particular, who attracted the regard of the people, although he was neither invested with the tiara nor the ermine. This was no other than John Huss, the undaunted Bohemian, and preacher of a new doctrine, who made his appearance at Costnitz, to defend his creed before the learned divines of all nations. The Costnitzers had, indeed, received him with mixed feelings, because he had been reported to be a heretic; but the imperial passport had hitherto protected him from every attack, and his simple virtues had at last gained him the hearts of all honest men. Whenever he appeared in the streets, the citizens respectfully saluted him; the children thronged around him, and listened attentively to his mild discourse, although uttered in barbarous German. The friends of Huss, the guards which King Wenzesla had assigned to him, together with the nobles of Ehlum and Lanzenbrock, were alike warned of the conse-

quences of their attachment to him. He was himself exhorted to beware, but his unbounded confidence in God and in the word of kings made him disregard every well-intended caution. He undauntedly frequented the tribunals which were instituted by the cardinals to examine his doctrines, but did not apprehend that ruin would so soon overtake him.

On the twenty-eighth day of November, Pope John, having recovered from a slight indisposition, was sitting at a half-open window, inhaling the freshness of a clear, untroubled atmosphere. Before him stood Duke Frederick of Austria.

"My resources never fail me," said the duke, and his bright eye beamed with intelligence as he spoke. "When I appoint persons to watch, I pay like a king; and I am therefore better served than the emperor, who is always in need of money. Your holiness may be assured, upon the honour of a prince, they will carry it into execution, if not to-day, most certainly to-morrow. Huss is irrecoverably lost; the cardinals, believe me, are agreed upon it."

"If the Bohemian, however," rejoined the pope, forcing up his eyebrows, "be executed,

what becomes of the emperor's word, as well as our own?"

"Sigismund's word is utterly valueless," replied Frederick. "The Luxemburger is not at all concerned about a breach of faith; he belongs to a race which is always in want of money, though never without an abundant supply of oaths."

"But will the world believe," asked the pope, "that we were ignorant of the actions of our cardinals?"

"Without doubt," replied Frederick, coolly; "you are looked upon as nothing better than a captive to your own church"—

"What?" exclaimed John.

"It is true," continued the duke. "Do not deceive yourself, with regard to your own situation. In spite of the homage rendered to you, and the splendour with which you are surrounded, you are scarcely better off than the heretic, Huss. If you are not threatened with the stake, a judgment of condemnation is nevertheless hanging over you. Think, holy father, what a spectacle you have exhibited to the world: a successor to the holy chair servilely following the emperor, wherever the latter thinks proper to command a council; a pope waiting indolently here for the

same emperor, who ought to have waited for and received him; a vicar of Jesus Christ ignorant of the resolutions taken by his priests. What will be the consequence of all this?"

"You are right, my son," replied the pope, sorrowfully. "Alas! these are wicked times! The cardinals have betrayed me. They will, however, find, when too late, what a bed of thorns they have prepared for themselves.—Should the stubborn Benedict triumph"——

"Give yourself no concern, holy father!" said the duke, interrupting him. "Neither Benedict nor Gregory will prevail. The general voice demands, that the chair of St. Peter be vacated, and filled anew. The emperor has no desire to keep you in it. He has no power to protect you against the hatred of the English, French, and Germans, who might have at least treated your legates with better courtesy."

"What an abyss is opening before us?" ejaculated John, in dismay. "If every thing be as you represent, we can look nowhere for assistance. We must succumb."

"That your holiness must decidedly not do," replied the duke, "so long as you may reckon upon friends, who can assist you to

baffle the designs of your adversaries. Austria, Baden, and Burgundy, will support you against the collective strength of the Luxemburger and his adherents."

"I place no reliance upon the landgrave," rejoined John, despondingly; "and the Duke of Burgundy is at a distance. What would become of me if both these props should fail me in the hour of danger?"

"Then you have *me*;" replied Frederick, proudly. "The whole earth is subject to Austria! I will bear you harmless through your difficulties, and no one shall venture to touch a hair of your head."

"Good prince!" exclaimed the pope, overpowered with gratitude. "Who so worthy as thou to be called the champion of the holy see."

An uproar was now heard. The duke looked from the window into the street, and said, "See, holy father! if I am not a true prophet. Huss is approaching, surrounded by his partisans, and appears to be fettered. This day's audience has probably decided his doom."

The pope looked where the duke pointed; but was overpowered with shame, when he

beheld the accused walking quietly in his fetters, and fixing his eyes upon the holy father, as if to remind him of his pledge. Just as he had reached the pope's residence, a fellow of the lower class, the servant of an Italian doctor, forced his way through the throng, to see the heretic, whose arrest had greatly excited the populace. The guards who were with the prisoner drove away with their lances every one that betrayed the least compassion for him, but suffered the Italian to approach, who immediately struck the defenceless Huss, with brutal ferocity, upon the face. Huss bore this ill-treatment without a murmur; but the foul deed met with a speedy and signal retribution. A young man sprang from the crowd, seized the ruffian by the collar, and with a kick stretched him prostrate on the earth. The more respectable part of the people, and the spectators at the windows, cheered him, while the rabble were awed into silence. This occurrence was the more remarkable, as the brave youth was dressed in the costume of a deacon. He had pressed down his tasselled cap over his forehead, twisted the train of his garment round his left arm, and buttoned up the right sleeve, to

enable him the better to stand upon his defence. He was about to visit the Italian with still severer punishment, when Huss said to him —“ I thank thee, generous youth ; but in chastising the sinner, we should spare the man ! ”

The young churchman now began to arrange his dress, which his late exertions had put into disorder. Whilst he was so engaged, he heard a female voice behind him. “ See ! Herr von Königseck, that is a man after my taste.— Determination and bold actions are the great virtues of your sex ! ” Turning suddenly round, he beheld a stately female figure enter the door of a respectable house, leaning on the arm of an elegantly-dressed man. The fair one, whose attractions were of no ordinary description, was attired in a style indicative at once of rank and opulence. The deacon remained riveted to the spot, until the noise of the crowd, who hurried by, reminded him that he was in the street.

The Duke of Austria now returned with his retinue to his palace. Trumpeters in magnificent dresses headed the procession, holding their polished instruments ready to sound at the

corner of every street, in order to proclaim the approach of their master. Halberdiers, in the colours of Austria, with their halberds on their shoulders, followed, while the duke himself, surrounded by his nobles, rode behind the waving banners, which were decorated with the arms of Austria and the Tyrol. Pages walked by his stirrup, while armed body-guards, with white breast-plates, closed the procession. The duke's keen eye had already recognised the young defender of Huss before the pope's window, and he beckoned to him to approach. The attendants filed off, and made a large circle round the duke, who bent forward and said, "What are you doing here, Dagobert? How can you be so mad as to take the part of a criminal?"

"And was I not in the right?" asked Dagobert. "Whatever the Bohemian's doctrine, he is still a human being; and you, illustrious duke, would have acted as I did, had you been in my place."

Frederick paused for a moment, and then said, with a familiar nod, "Perhaps I should; but whenever you wish to defend the rights of man, first lay aside the church's livery. Good

day to you!" Saying this, he urged his horse forward.

"The duke is in the right," said Dagobert to himself.

"Ha!" suddenly exclaimed a voice behind him. "What has possessed you, that you are wandering about in the broad daylight like a ghost, without sense, hearing, sight, or speech?"

Dagobert turned, and beheld Gerard, to whom he replied, with a sarcastic smile, "I am looking forward to the moment when I shall be elected pope."

"Would to God you were!" exclaimed Gerard. "I might then hope for a dispensation from feeding upon these Lent provisions, which are terribly uncongenial to a poor sinner's stomach. Our landlord at the Angel, a superlative scoundrel, who, before the assembling of the council, never passed a Friday without a meal of meat; now, on the three mortification days, provides nothing but fish, meal, and oil. A murrain seize him!"

"Fast and pray whenever you have nothing better to do," said Dagobert, gravely, and was about to make off, when Gerard prevented him. "Do me the favour," said he, "to go a little

way with me. I wish to pay a visit to Master Thomas, who is the best cutler in Costnitz. He is taking off the rust from a sword-blade of mine, and if you wish to see a back-duster, such as even the Emperor Charlemagne would have been proud of, come with me."

"What have I to do with your sword-blades?" asked Dagobert, smiling. "I have to fight in future only with tapers and incense."

"It is not more than fifty yards off," rejoined Gerard; "it is yonder, where the cuirass hangs, with the sign of the Club and the Morning Star over the door."

"There? Oh! with all my heart," said Dagobert; and turning round, he bent his way towards the house. It was the same in which the beautiful woman had entered, who had so lately extolled his prowess. The workshop, which surrounded a court at the back of the house, resounded with the din of hammers, bellows, and singing workmen; in the midst of whom stood the master himself, examining a blade which had been just finished.

"How goes it, honest Thomas?" asked Gerard. "What have you done with my rapier? is the rust upon it still, or can a pretty girl see her face in it?"

Thomas pointed to Caspar, who was just then polishing the weapon, and after some conversation between the two friends and Thomas, it came out that the lady who had taken up her abode in the latter's house, was no other than Miss von Baldergrün, by the Hartz forest. "If she be not the richest," said a broad-faced artificer, "she is certainly not the poorest young lady of quality in all Germany. She has two or three free tenants who punctually pay their rents, and she can count sixteen vassals, myself among the number."

"Will she make a long stay here?" asked Dagobert, whose curiosity became the more excited at this information.

"I know not," replied the cutler, wagging his head; "yet I should suppose she will, for it is said she is about to be married here."

"Married!" exclaimed Dagobert, "to whom?"

"For my part, I know not," said the fellow, laughing. "She has two strings to her bow; either Herr von Königseck, or Herr von Montfort, I understand, is to be the happy man."

"I thank you," rejoined Dagobert, and abruptly turned his back upon the officious informant. Gerard came up to him just at this

moment, flourishing his newly-polished sword, and extolling its merits to the skies. The friends now quitted the shop together, without saluting either master or servant. Thomas shook his head. He could not understand the young churchman. The vassal, however, hastened to inform his mistress what he suspected, that the youthful stranger had been captivated by her bright eyes, as he had made the most anxious inquiries concerning her; her conquest was therefore, no doubt, complete.

CHAPTER VII.

DAGOBERT had not visited his uncle for several days. He had been anxiously expected both by him and Florilla, although from very different motives. His appearance, at last, after high mass on the Sunday, gave them much satisfaction. He was, however, greatly surprised that neither the clerical cut of his coat, nor the serious cast of his countenance, appeared to make any favourable impression on his reverend relative, who, on the contrary, gave him a very cold reception; while Florilla's haughty and reserved manner portended a storm. "Is it thus that you prepare for your sacred calling?" said the holy man.

Dagobert inquired in what he had offended.

The abbot replied, "You choose to forget, unsanctified, intemperate German. Madman! I will explain in what you have offended. A neo-

phyte of our holy mother church, and one dedicated to her sacred ministry, has degraded himself by becoming the champion of a heretic in the public street. In order to defend a heterodox Bohemian, he knocks down an orthodox Italian ! Shame on thee ! repent thy abominable iniquity in dust and ashes ! Nay—no excuse ! I well know that in Germany the sacred profession is no check upon the grossest propensities ; that even your bishops and presbyters mount on horseback, and attend tournaments and horse-races ; but I will not suffer you to be guilty of such abominations. Now depart, and prepare yourself for the visit which you have to pay to-morrow to his eminence the Archbishop of Ravenna. I dine to-day with this distinguished prelate, and will endeavour to appease his anger at your disgraceful conduct, for he is highly incensed against you : remember, however, I will do this for the first and last time. Now be-gone."

Dagobert listened in respectful silence, and immediately left the room. Florilla, who was waiting for him upon the landing, showed him into her own apartment, exacting from him a promise to observe the most profound secrecy.

"Monsignore takes his dinner from home to-day," said she, "remain with me; but stir not a foot until your uncle is gone." Dagobert could not refuse so gentle an invitation, and smiled assent. After the lapse of a very tedious hour, his uncle left the house, when Florilla was particularly attentive in laying out the table with elegance. She brought in the dishes herself, and having sent away the servant, she closed the door, and they both sat down to their repast. Dagobert, however, soon became silent and abstracted. Florilla endeavoured to rouse him. "Tell me, what makes you so sad in the presence of a young maiden, who would do any thing to please you? If it be your uncle's displeasure, take my word for it there is nothing to grieve about. If it be the recollection of some fair one whom you have left behind you, confide your grief to me, for I bear you the most disinterested friendship. Or probably you may wish to woo me, and the word is already on your tongue, but you have not the courage to pronounce it? If so, out with it boldly. Try your fortune; perhaps I might not say 'No.'"

Dagobert replied, without the least confusion, "Dear cousin! my uncle's displeasure gives me

no manner of concern. To say the truth, I paid little or no attention to what he said. Just as little do I think of wooing you; you have already shown me as much of your favour as I desire. Both my condition in life and my love for my uncle forbid me asking more. I may, therefore, frankly confess to you, that you guessed but too truly when you spoke of an old attachment. As you appear to take some interest in my happiness, I will incur the hazard of your raillery, and make you a full confession. Mine is no ordinary attachment, therefore listen, and let me have your sympathy." Florilla's goodness of heart, as well as the curiosity so natural to her sex in affairs of love, imparted a lively animation to her countenance, although Dagobert's first words had clouded it. "Speak," she rejoined, "I promise you my friendship, and never to betray the confidence you may repose in me."

"Two years have nearly elapsed," said Dagobert, "since the burgomaster of our city gave a great tournament on the Romerberg, to which all respectable people of the city and country round were invited, and at which young men of noble families contended, both on horseback and on foot. It would have occasioned my death,

had I been absent from so noble a spectacle. I therefore entered the lists, duly caparisoned, and rode my father's proudest steed, called 'Defy the Devil,' who is still without his match, both in strength and courage. Proud at being so admirably mounted, I put my horse on his mettle, by spurring him and pulling at the curb; upon feeling the spur, he reared, plunged, and flung out his heels in all directions, throwing the gravel up to the very seats of the spectators. Having, at length, as I imagined, sufficiently displayed my skill, I was about to wheel round to the charge, when I heard, at no great distance from me, a malicious laugh, which proceeded from an ugly fellow, who was sitting upon one of the benches, and declaiming, like a madman, against my skill and horsemanship, which all the other spectators had greatly admired. I was incensed at this, and threatened the scoundrel with personal correction, if he did not desist. My threats, however, only increased his clamour. My wrath being further kindled by these aggravated insults, I made a sign to the trumpeters to cease sounding; and then riding forward to the bench where the insulter sat, struck him such a blow upon the scone with

the blade of my sword, that he fell from his seat into the mud. I took compassion upon him, however, when I saw him raised from the ground by the spectators, without signs of life. But upon my unbuttoning his waistcoat to give him air, he opened his eyes, and gave me a severe blow with his clenched fist, crying out at the same time, like a madman, 'Away with you—touch me not, you accursed Goi!' By this exclamation, he proclaimed himself to be a Jew, which further excited my rage, as well as that of all the bystanders; for we have strictly forbidden any person of the stock of Abraham to be present at our entertainments, because the Jews frequently employ the most insidious arts to convert our Christian pleasures into sorrow.

"I could not contain my indignation at being thus insulted by a Jew, and would willingly have followed up my attack upon him, had not a soft hand withheld my upraised arm, and a tender voice implored me at the same time to have mercy upon him. 'Oh, strike him not again, sir! Zodiah is not a dog—he is my father's servant, and will never more be guilty of incurring your anger—spare him, I beseech you.'

"Expect not from me, dear Florilla," continued

Dagobert, "a description of her who then addressed me; even your beauty would suffer by a comparison with hers.

"The Jew was borne away by his brethren, and at that moment I felt the warm pressure of the maiden's lips upon my hand, in token of gratitude for my forbearance."

"Happy man!" exclaimed Florilla. "The roses of life have shed their fragrance upon you; but no man can behold them bloom in their paradise, without feeling the thorn while he inhales the perfume."

"Alas! the honey and the wormwood have been already mingled in my cup of pleasure. But I was too young to be long sad; I soon again joined the festivities of the city, once more mounted my horse, and made excursions over plains and mountains, with my youthful companions. At length it struck me, that I would endeavour to discover the lovely object of my unlawful partiality. After various unsuccessful inquiries in the narrow street where the Jews reside, the countenance of the beautiful stranger who had enraptured me unexpectedly appeared before me at the door of her father's dwelling. The maiden offered me no salutation, although

she knew me but too well! She looked after me, however, as I retreated from her view, until the angle of a distant building excluded me from her sight. I have seen her frequently since, for I did not fail to repeat my visits daily to the same street, and at the same hour. You will probably smile, dear cousin, when I tell you, that this fascination continued to work upon me for more than a year, without my having the courage to communicate it to the lovely object who had caused it; for whenever I saw her, I feigned, if not absolute indifference, at least a tranquillity of feeling as foreign to my heart as honey is to gall."

"You Germans," said Florilla, gaily, "absolutely bolt the gates of paradise against yourselves."

"Right!" replied Dagobert, "when the gate of paradise is open, it is paradise no longer. Behind those hills which surround our meadows, we think there are more beautiful groves and more blooming fields; but scarcely have we climbed the heights when we discover a prospect only similar to that which we have already seen. It is a pleasure to have desires, but how often are we cloyed with the enjoyment of them."

Dagobert now entered into a detail of circumstances that occurred during a fire which had broken out one summer's evening in the Jews' Street, when, while rescuing Esther from the devouring flames, he was again brought into contact with the red-haired Zodia, who had insulted him at the tournament. Esther, now impressed with warmer sentiments than those of gratitude towards Dagobert, said to him, "If you are a priest, return and baptize me. I would willingly go with you into paradise, without beholding the eternal Jerusalem. But," added she, with some hesitation, "that event can only take place when my father and grandfather are both dead ; for it would break their hearts, and I should wish to see them depart in peace." This plain and flattering proof of affection at once removed all doubt between us, and we then exchanged our first and last pledge of love. The clamour which was now growing loud around us, drove me from the house, and I have never since beheld the charming Esther. I have been torn from her without having had the melancholy pleasure of bidding her farewell !"

Florilla wiped a tear from her cheek, and thanked the narrator. "How am I flattered by

your confidence," she said. "You have imparted to me the secret of your life; I cannot make you a similar return, because I have none."

"I want not your confidence, but your pity," replied Dagobert. "Alas! it is my misfortune that my heart is divided between two objects. I had not supposed it capable of so much fluctuation. My love is balanced between Esther and another, and my destiny separates me from both."

Dagobert now related the afterpiece to the adventure in the High Street, where he had defended the prisoner Huss against the brutality of the Italian; but when he described the figure of his new mistress, and the house into which she had entered, Florilla threw herself back into the arm-chair unable to restrain her laughter. Dagobert was offended, and rose up to take his departure, but Florilla detaining him, said, "The person you have described is no other than your sister Wallrade, who certainly would never have dreamt of converting her uncourteous brother into an ardent wooer."

"Wallrade! is it possible?" asked Dagobert in astonishment. "Vain, conceited creature! In truth, dear cousin, you could not have ad-

ministered a more effectual remedy for my folly than the name of Wallrade. Where were my eyes? I am delighted, however, that *she* also was blind, and knew me not. Accept my best thanks. I am now cured, and can laugh at my own folly."

"But you do not repent of the service you rendered the Jewish maiden?" asked Florilla with a smile.

"Is it possible that you, the friend of a venerable abbot, can take any interest in an alien from the church?"

"Alas!" replied Florilla with a sigh, "you may easily be astonished at hearing an Italian, who venerates the Madonna, speak in this way. Probably, however, my kindly feelings towards the amiable Esther will be better explained, when I tell you that I was not born in Cesena, but in the *Ghetto** at Rome, that I lost my parents when I was a child, and, that your uncle, out of humanity, converted me to the true faith."

"Hoho!" exclaimed he laughing, "here is an adventure that would have done credit to

* Jew's quarter.

any witch on the Brocken? I have fallen in love with a Jewess and my own sister, and my confidant also turns out to be a blossom grafted from a branch of one of the twelve tribes. No; I must abandon such connexions, that I may not be treated like the Bohemian heretic; therefore a good evening to you, fair daughter of Abraham."

He imprinted a hasty kiss on Florilla's cheek and departed. At the great gate he ran against his uncle, who was returning home, but who, thanks to the twilight, did not recognise him; nevertheless, the holy man endeavoured to detain him by crying out, "who are you?" "A rabbi," replied the wag, "who wishes to be converted to the true faith by the renowned Jerome Frosch." He then pushed the astonished abbot aside and decamped at his best speed.

CHAPTER VIII.

DAGOBERT was not of a disposition to mope ; he therefore led a merry life among the many gay companions with which Costnitz at this time abounded. His sombre habiliments did not render his society the less welcome, because the arch, goodhumoured wag was concealed under them. The young ladies of the best families assembled around him, because he was ever the agreeable songster, the ready player on the lute, and the fertile inventor of romance ; while the young men esteemed him as a skilful horseman, an experienced falconer, and an incomparable toper. Nothing else was spoken of in the whole town but young Frosch's frolics and adventures. "Very right !" said his patron, Duke Frederick, on one occasion to him, "I am very well pleased at what I hear of you. The boy must play out his pranks. It is the

course of nature. When your uncle has concluded his affairs here, you will be obliged to follow him over the mountains; therefore let there be no interruption to your mirth, so long as you can conduct yourself with decorum. His majesty, the emperor, is expected to arrive at Costnitz to-day or to-morrow. A happy thought! The Christmas celebration will hail the arrival of the Saviour of Christendom. He will make his entry into the city just as our church will be pouring forth the solemn anthem, 'In dulci jubilo!' I am sorry," added he, abruptly breaking off the discourse, that I must not enter into further conversation with you now, good Dagobert, having to make preparations for the emperor's reception."

Dagobert understood the hint, and immediately took his leave. An agreeable pensiveness took possession of him as, shutting himself up in his chamber, he indulged in former recollections. He turned his thoughts to his sister Wallrade, against whom his almost forgotten rancour had been lately rekindled. "Yes," exclaimed he, after a few moments' reflection, "I will offer her the hand of reconciliation, and that blessed day, when the Lord of our

salvation descended from his glory to dwell among us, shall witness the fulfilment of this sacred resolution."

The emperor's magnificent entry into the city, which took place that day, had not induced him to quit his chamber. After night-fall, however, wrapped in a warm mantle, he bent his way towards the dikes, against which the lake of Constance dashed its troubled waters, in defiance of the frost which had hitherto vainly attempted to impose upon them its icy fetters. After a long and solitary ramble, he returned towards the city, which swarmed with the busy multitude, as if it were broad daylight. Every house, nay, every hovel, was brilliantly illuminated, while pleasure seemed to rejoice every heart. At that moment he heard the sudden stroke of the midnight hour, which was immediately followed by the bell in the cathedral tower, summoning all to the mass of the sacred Christmas eve. The crowd soon filled the convents, the parish churches, and the cathedral. Dagobert entered the latter. "Praised, O Lord, be the eve of thy blessed nativity," he fervently ejaculated, when his fingers, touching the water in the holy font,

came in contact with those of a lady very sumptuously attired. He was mute with astonishment—his sister stood before him—Wallrade looked at him with equal surprise. She then proudly elevated her head, and turned haughtily from him, proceeding slowly towards the altar. Dagobert, however, mingled with the crowd, and whispered as she passed, “To-day is the joyful celebration of our Lord’s birth. Shall we then, who were born of the same mother, still continue in childish hostility towards each other? Shall we carry with us to our graves the guilt of an unnatural hatred, and thus die, as we have lived, in enmity at once with God and with ourselves?”

Wallrade remained a moment in thoughtful silence, then casting her expressive eyes upon the speaker, replied, “A separation of many years has rendered your features strange to me; from my uncle, however, I learnt that I still had a brother, and that he was in this city. I must, nevertheless, candidly tell you, that this meeting has not in the least contributed to lessen my prejudice against you; but as you can be of service to me at this moment, I will, for appearance sake, give you my hand.” Wall-

rade here pointed out two men, who kept their eyes fixed upon her from a distance. "He in the coloured dress," said she, "is Herr von Königseek, an effeminate simpleton, who smells of oil of rosemary, laces himself until he is as stiff as a mummy, and who, from his cowardice, has never ventured into the lists. That little humpbacked man, with gloomy countenance, short neck, and high shoulders, possesses a heart full of daring and of passion. He is the Count von Montfort. Both these gentlemen are my suitors, and both are favoured by my uncle, but to me they are equally detestable; the former because he is no man, and the latter because he is a monstrous one."

Dagobert viewed them with some surprise, and felt obliged to confess, that a proud beauty like his sister might expect to win a nobler prize than either a coxcomb or a hunchback. On the other hand, thought he, what a woman is my sister! inaccessible to every pious emotion, proud, obstinate, and implacable, and carrying her harsh feelings to the very altar.

Wallrade interrupted his reflections, by promising to afford him an immediate opportunity of securing her gratitude and con-

fidence, if he would only pledge himself to secrecy.

"You may depend upon me, Wallrade," replied Dagobert. "I am willing and ready to do all you require, if by so doing, I may only remove the prejudice which you entertain against me."

"Hear me, then," said Wallrade, confidently. "There arrived to-day in the emperor's suite a man who has basely wronged me. His crime it cannot concern you to know, I therefore pass it over—let it suffice that he has wronged me. The very sight of this man is a torment to me, since I dare not avenge myself upon him by offering him any personal violence, though he has sufficient cause to dread me. The condemned criminal stands not in greater fear of the hangman. The only wish I have, is to drive the offender from my sight, and for this purpose I address myself to you, whose intrepidity I have already witnessed and applauded."

"But how is this to be done?" asked Dagobert, with some surprise.

"A single visit will be sufficient," rejoined Wallrade. "The person's name is Rudolph Bilger von der Rhön; he is one of the em-

peror's verderers. You can easily ascertain where he resides. Go to him, and tell him plainly it is my will that he quits this city immediately. If he consent, say nothing more to him; if he refuse, challenge him to single combat. You do not want courage, but my word for it, you will not have to push matters to extremity. You are now master of my wishes—be but resolute, and they may be easily accomplished.”

Dagobert, who felt at a loss what to say, inquired why she did not intrust one of her suitors with this chivalrous commission?

“Precisely, because they are my suitors,” replied Wallrade, “for as I intend to marry neither, in neither will I encourage the least hope of obtaining my hand. Do my bidding, therefore, forthwith, for by this only can you purchase my reconciliation. Tell me what is your intention?”

“To do your bidding, sweet sister, at all hazards,” replied Dagobert.

“Farewell then,” said Wallrade, “I do not require you to accompany me home, as I would not willingly excite a suspicion which I should consider it beneath my dignity to remove.”

Dagobert commenced his inquiries on the following day. The celebration of the Christmas festival greatly facilitated his success. The heads of the church, the princes and nobles, with the emperor at their head, attended by a large retinue, were assembled in the cathedral on this joyful morning, in order to participate in the customary solemnities. Sigismund, whose person and countenance were alike prepossessing, was surrounded with all the pomp and magnificence of a German emperor. Dagobert, by his acquaintance with Duke Frederick's household, and particularly with his carver, was easily enabled to obtain the information he so industriously sought. Dagobert was struck with astonishment when Von der Rhön was pointed out to him. His mild features and modest deportment by no means justified, either the commission with which the young deacon had been intrusted, or the prejudice entertained against him by Wallrade. When the service, however, was concluded, Dagobert followed Von der Rhön to his inn, and was shown into an apartment which, as it appeared, was not occupied by the *verderer alone*. When he entered, a young and beautiful

woman was hanging upon the verderer's neck, while a child of about two years old was smiling in his face. Dagobert requested a private audience with Von der Rhön, who, after he had earnestly surveyed him for a moment, gave him a very courteous reception, and said, "I think, worthy sir, that you, whom I never had the honour of seeing until now, can have nothing to communicate to me, which may not be heard by my wife. I would, nevertheless, willingly comply with your request, but the hotel is so much crowded by the retinue of our gracious emperor, that this small apartment is the only one left at the disposal of myself and family. Be pleased, therefore, to deliver your commission here."

Dagobert was about to do this, but upon looking again at the lovely mother and her child, he was deterred from allowing his evil tidings to reach their innocent ears. He therefore begged the verderer to follow him to the side of the room. Bilger shook his head at this strange request, but, nevertheless, complied. "I am sent," said Dagobert, "by Wallrade von Baldergrün." At the mention of his sister's name the verderer's face be-

came as pale as death. "Where—where—is she—what is her will?"—"She is here," replied Dagobert, who could not but observe his agitation.—"Here! do you say?" exclaimed Bilger seizing the window frame for support. "And I then—tell me—I am lost?"—"I do not understand you," said Dagobert mildly. "Wallrade only requests your immediate departure from this neighbourhood, because your presence, she says, is odious to her."—"Alas!" exclaimed Bilger with a sigh, "I must obey. Tell her, worthy sir, that I will depart as soon as the festivities cease. But may I ask," continued he, in a faltering voice, "if you are acquainted with any thing that has taken place between the young lady and myself?"—"Hush!" exclaimed Dagobert, looking significantly towards the verderer's wife, and without awaiting his reply, he abruptly bowed to the lady and retired.

His feelings had been strongly excited by this interview, and in the afternoon of the same day he hastened to his sister. He found with her the abbot, Von Königseck and Montfort, who were greatly surprised at seeing him enter the house. After a pause his uncle began to

speak of the triumph of affection over enmity, and he blest the holy day which had again brought Wallrade and Dagobert together. "Yes!" exclaimed he, while tears of joy bedewed his aged cheek, "Heaven has heard my anxious prayer. That reconciliation has taken place which was the dearest wish of my heart. This brave nephew, whom I love as a father loves his son—(Dagobert smiled)—this affectionate niece, who is as dear to me as the new-born babe to its rejoicing mother—(Wallrade shrugged up her shoulders)—are once more united in the bonds of kindred affection." He now kissed both Dagobert and Wallrade's foreheads, and obliged the brother and sister to embrace each other; but had two statues fallen into each other's arms, they could not have come into a more heartless contact. The spectators had by this time become weary of the spectacle, and the vesper summons was therefore heard with pleasure. The abbot took up his mantle and hat in great haste, in order to proceed to church, Von Königseck offered to escort Wallrade to the cathedral, while Von Montfort proposed a walk into the country: Wallrade, however, declined both proposals;

urging as an excuse, that she had something of importance to settle with her brother.

No opposition was made to Wallrade's wishes; but the abbot drew Dagobert aside, and urged him to use his best endeavours to induce her to yield her hand either to Von Königseck or Montfort—at the same time promising him a suitable reward in case of success. He then retired with his niece's suitors.

Wallrade having ascertained that no listener was present, fixed her penetrating eyes upon Dagobert, and asked him sternly if he had fulfilled her wishes. Dagobert replied in the affirmative, and assured her, that Von der Rhön would speedily depart. "'Tis well!" said she, "I know his destination. I have learnt that he is going to Mörsburg, as the bishop's master of the hounds. In case he should be obnoxious to me there, I reckon upon your further assistance to get him dismissed."

Dagobert had hitherto forborne giving utterance to his feelings; but his indignation was roused at this tyranny, and he exclaimed with energy, "If this man has so grossly offended you, that his destruction can alone appease your rancour towards him, tell me so at once,

and I will throw my hood aside, until I shall have met, in mortal combat, the man who has wronged you. This is a brother's duty : but I never will be the slave of your vindictive malice. I have seen this poor man's wife and child ; and never will I banish peace from the bosom of these innocents, by wrongfully persecuting the husband and the father !”

“ His wife ! his child !” echoed Wallrade, sarcastically. “ Indeed ! Are they here ? I thank you for this information ! ’Tis well !— Von der Rhön would do right to decamp without delay ; not on my account alone, but also on account of my tender-hearted brother, who has, it seems, an indomitable predilection for young married women, not even excepting his own step-mother !”

“ Wallrade !” exclaimed Dagobert, horror-struck at the impious accusation.

“ Deny it not !” she cried, fiercely. “ Deny not what is known to all Franckfort. It reached even my ears in my remote solitude, and has increased the hatred which I bear toward you. Your false lips did indeed deceive me yesterday ; but to-day the self-interested, vile, inconstant Dagobert, stands before me in the full

atrocious of his guilt. Henceforth all communication between us ceases. Do what you please—yet dare but to betray my secret, and I will not only promulgate thy infamy to the world, but also prove to thee, that this arm is strong enough to seal my vengeance even in a brother's blood !”

Dagobert surveyed his degenerate sister with mingled feelings of indignation and abhorrence ; and turning abruptly from her, quitted her presence in disgust.

CHAPTER IX.

ON new-year's day, 1415, the whole population of Franckfort was in motion, to celebrate the festival. The churches were thronged with the devout, and the streets with the profane; while shouts of mirth resounded through the city. The elder, Diether Frosch, was detained by the duties of his office at the town-house, while his lady, having performed her customary devotions at the church of the Madonna, was returning home, when Else, who had been anxiously waiting for her at the door, hastily advanced to meet her.—“ My dear mistress,” said she, “ be not alarmed—a guest awaits your arrival.”

“ Who is it,” asked the lady, anxiously, at the same time directing her eye towards the window, where she perceived a countenance which was familiar, but by no means agreeable,

to her. She hastily ascended the stairs, and entered her apartment, where a tall man, in the threadbare suit of a cavalier, was lolling in an easy chair. His whole appearance denoted him to be one of that class of needy gentry, who had little to boast of, except their armorial bearings, and their successful adventures on the highway, at a time when robbery was no disgraceful distinction, and plunder an honourable prize.

“What does this mean, Veit?” asked Margaret, angrily. “Why are you here again? You must know that your presence is as surprising as it is disagreeable to me.”

“No one can be more concerned at this than I am,” replied the intruder; “but you must know, dear sister, that I cannot avoid it. The world does not trouble itself about me, I must therefore trouble myself about the world. My relations invite me not, I must consequently invite myself. Be pacified, my dear Margery, anger will only distort that sweet countenance without making matters a whit the better. I am here to wish you a happy new year, and to pass the day with you.”

“Whence come you?”

“From the high road, or more properly speaking, from our rat’s nest at Gelnhausen.”

“What is your aunt doing?—how is she?”

“As lame as ever. Her favourite tabby lately scratched out her right eye, so that she has now but one, and that’s as dull and dry as a squeezed grape. In other respects, she is well enough, and all would be right if her buttery were only better garnished.”

“People must be contented,” said Margaret, petulantly. “All cannot live in plenty; the idle deserve to starve.”

“By the mass!” exclaimed Veit, “you have learnt something since your marriage. Your becoming a dotard’s wife, has made you forget yourself as a poor gentleman’s sister. Remember, gentle Margery, that your kindred blotted their escutcheon when they consented that you should become the wife of an elder, who, although the emperor should call him a noble, would be but an elder still. I despise your state functionaries—the mere underlings and tools of princes. I give you joy of your dignity.”

“Silence, slanderer!” exclaimed Margaret. “Have I not supported you for more than six years? Have you ever once honestly endea-

voured to gain your own bread? Did not my husband propose to make you a captain of the police-runners, but you were too proud to serve among citizens?"

"Serve, indeed!" cried Veit, with a sneer. "The very word justifies my refusal. I would not serve the emperor; I will live according to my rank, and be free, without eating your burgomaster's bread."

"You will be free?—yes, by plundering and leading the life of a vagabond. I will do no more for you. You are a disgrace to our name. You are even suspected of having been concerned in the murder of Von Bonames, the priest, who was attacked by assassins two years ago, on his way to matins. You had sworn you would be revenged on him, because he would not give you absolution in the confessional. You have been forbidden to enter the town. How can you dare make your appearance here? You are putting yourself in jeopardy."

"Oh," rejoined Veit, "I know how far I dare venture. The gates of the town are open, on a festival, till sunset, even to its bitterest foes. I am not such a simpleton as Wernher Von Hyrzenhorn, who suffered himself to be taken a

short while since, and is now in the Esehenheim prison. Don't you remember the sturdy varlet? He was once your suitor? Riches make short memories."

"I have not forgotten him," replied Margaret. "He was truly a very boorish wooer—but what can I do for him?"

"Much," replied Veit; "and this was partly the cause of my journey hither. I know very well that the bailiff is in love with you, and one word from your persuasive tongue would either set my companion in arms at liberty, or at least obtain for him some mitigation of the ransom of four hundred florins."

"What do you take me for?" asked Margaret, with affected astonishment. "You seem truly to have taken a most flattering estimate of my chastity! I am not in love with the bailiff."

"Don't play the saint, my little dove!" rejoined Veit, smiling; "I know better. The bailiff is portly, well-favoured, and full of life; while your spouse is lean, ungainly, and marrowless. The one has the freshness of youth upon his cheek, while the other has been sealed with the signet of sixty-six years."

"Scoffer!" said the offended wife, whilst the

glow of indignation was upon her cheeks, "how can you traduce that venerable man, whose grey hairs ought to command your respect."

"My respect!" said Veit, with a significant grin, "why? It would have been better for us both had you tormented him to death, and I had sung a *De Profundis* over his venerable bones. You would then be no longer under the necessity of wearing the mask of virtue, nor I a threadbare tunic. I should then have become the guardian of your boy, who unfortunately must be called Frosch, although he is no more a Frosch."—He paused and tittered, while Margaret, whose feelings were deeply wounded, turned upon him a look of withering scorn, and obstinately resisted his vehement demands to see the boy. During this contention, Diether returned in the full costume of a sheriff of the city. He was not a little surprised at the sight of his wife's unwelcome visiter, who did not, however, allow him time to express his displeasure, but throwing himself on the elder's neck, exclaimed, "Happy new year to you! I wish you all the health necessary to attain the age of Methuselah, as much money as would fill an argosy, and as much happiness as a reverend elder

is capable of enjoying. I have no doubt but you will reward me handsomely for my good wishes; what say you, old brother-in-law?"

Diether assumed a look of gravity, and calmly said, "I will at least requite your congratulations, by advising you to keep quiet at Gelnhausen. Paul, the journeyman weaver, has just departed this life at his master's house in the Rattle Street, after having made important depositions concerning the murder of Bonames. The Syndic will bring them forward against you before the council."

Veit became pale for an instant, but quickly regaining his self-possession, exclaimed, "It is a vile tissue of falsehood! The council cannot condemn me; I am not under its laws."

"The crime was committed within our jurisdiction," resumed Diether, "and we are no triflers. I advise you to make the best use you can of the warning I have given you, and depart. Your absence at this moment would be particularly desirable, as dinner is waiting for us, and there is no place at my table for an outlawed freebooter."

Just at this moment, Else led in little Hans, when Veit instantly darted upon him, like a

beast of prey, hugging and kissing him with a most vehement show of tenderness. Else and Margaret united their endeavours to rescue the child from threatened suffocation, but in vain. "Let him alone," exclaimed the *tender* uncle, "is not the boy my nephew? He is as certainly my nephew as he is your son, old grey-beard! Only listen, my dear, to the old man; is he not a funny papa? Thou'lt be a droll dog, too, I warrant me—like father, like son. Come, boy, there's food for thy merriment in that sheriff's gown—laugh at the old mummer—do, boy, laugh."

Diether, whose bosom was heaving with rage, nevertheless bore this insolence in silence. Veit still detained the boy, and imprinted a rough kiss upon his cheek. His wild looks and long whiskers, however, frightened the little fellow, who cried out, "Dear father, save me," and springing from the grasp of his tormentor, threw himself into Diether's arms.

Veit broke out into a loud laugh. "Dear father!" he said, echoing the child's words, "they have taught you the paternoster to the letter, although they have no faith in its efficacy. I wish you happiness with the boy,

reverend elder. He has not a feature of your's in his face, and certainly not a drop of your blood in his veins. May he do you honour! A kind benediction, and worth your acknowledgment. Farewell! I should not like to be troublesome, I am therefore going. Do not neglect to pay the money for me as usual; and you, dear sister, forget not to put in a good word to your bosom friend for your former suitor."

Saying these words, he hastily quitted the house, in which he left the gnawing worm of discontent. Nevertheless, he was by no means so tranquil at heart as might have been imagined from his unfeeling levity. Rage boiled within him as he thought of Diether's menace, whilst wormwood seemed to take root in his stony bosom at the recollection of reproaches which had been severely galling to his pride. Dread of the imperial laws had alone restrained him from taking revenge upon the spot. His insatiable avarice, which notwithstanding the repeated refusals he had received, induced him still to hope for future supplies from the elder's bounty, had also contributed something towards his forbearance. Nevertheless he looked forward to a horrible expiation of the insult which

had been offered to him. Absorbed in these reflections, he mounted his horse, after having taken his scanty meal, and his noon-day rest, and left the city immediately after vespers ; for the sun was already fast declining, and the hour when the city watch was set, was about to strike.

He made the best of his way to the beacon, and there halted to breathe his winded steed. He then turned off to the left from the high road ; and partly to avoid the snow-storm which was coming on, partly also to refresh himself, and in the hope of meeting with some of his acquaintance, he descended a gentle declivity, at the bottom of which stood a wretched alehouse, concealed among wild bushes, more frequently the resort of the midnight marauder than of the honest traveller. The smoky hovel was perfectly familiar to the too notorious Veit ; who, having rapped at the shattered window-shutter with his switch, in order to announce the arrival of a friend, drew his horse under the mean shed, which was meant to represent a stable, bound him fast to a beam, and having placed some chopped straw before him, entered the ale-

house. An old woman was busy at the hearth, blowing some wet brushwood into a flame, whilst a young wench, of a countenance by no means prepossessing, was sleeping in the corner with some hens, which had flown up on a perch above her head. There was no other living soul in the hut, the pavement of which was in so deplorable a plight, that the greatest precaution was necessary to prevent the fracture or luxation of a limb, in one of the holes with which it abounded. "Give me a glass of Funkelhans,"* cried Veit to the old woman, who immediately made a low courtesy, lighted a fresh splinter of wood, which served as a torch, and brought what was asked for. "I shall stay here till to-morrow," continued Veit, with a tone of importance. The woman again courtesied—assured him how sensible she was of the honour, and then went to her work.

"What are you boiling there, old lady?" asked Veit, unwilling to let the conversation drop.

"Gruel, noble sir," replied the landlady, as she turned a heavy kettle on the fire.

* A kind of tart wine, or sour cider.

" You know very well that we frequently have company. My husband went this morning to Bergen, on particular business, which will likely keep him late; and he and his companions will be glad of a comfortable mess when they come home."

" What is doing to-day at Bergen?"

" There is dancing and merry-making," was the reply. " A rich burgher's son, of Friedberg, who married the beautiful Eve of Bergen before Advent, receives her dowry to-day, and is to take it home."

" Indeed!" said Veit, sarcastically; " but you think he is likely to take it elsewhere. Is it not so?"

" Ah! by the mass!" answered the woman with a sigh. " I have often said to my husband, ' Marten, would it not be better for us to work honestly for our bread, and live in peace, than to obtain it by base plunder, which we are obliged to conceal, and live in constant dread of a halter.' He laughs at me whenever I talk to him in this way, and says, ' Wait a little, wife, until we have got enough; we will then make a pilgrimage to Compostella, offer a silver crown to the holy Jacob, get absolution,

and purchase ourselves an estate on the Rhine.”

“A fine proposal, indeed!” said Veit, laughing. “Then you are always amusing yourselves with the prospect of dying honest people; and, no doubt, of being numbered with the saints, if you can only bequeath a rich legacy to a convent.”

The old woman’s feelings were roused. “And why should we not participate in the blessings of Paradise?” asked she. “My Marten has never assassinated a priest.” “Hag!” exclaimed Veit, rising up in a rage, and laying hold of his dirk. The old woman ran to the bed where her daughter was sleeping, and awoke her with her cries.

“What are you howling about?” asked the wench, surlily, angry at being disturbed. “The gentleman won’t stab you in earnest. Your abominable calling, one would think, had sufficiently accustomed you to the sight of naked weapons, to prevent your being frightened by a bodkin?” Veit smiled, and replacing his dirk in the sheath, said, in a subdued tone, “Come, madonna, your hand—I meant not to harm you—it was only a soldier’s jest. But as for

you," said he, turning to the daughter, "I would rather hear you snore than preach. Get thee again to sleep, lest our conversation should vex thy pious ears."

"Which it certainly would," replied the maiden. "I would rather, therefore, sleep in the stable than near you;" saying which, she arose, and quitted the hut.

"That girl will break my heart," said the mother sighing heavily, "and I dare not scold her, because she is the only innocent person among us."

"She is a fool!" said Veit, surlily.

"No, dear sir, she is more intelligent than most girls of her age. The servant at the old convent for the penitent at Franckfort was her godmother, and brought her up from the age of ten years; I was myself then in good health, and able to act as her assistant in that convent. Our Judith grew up there to be twenty, survived her godmother and took her place, until I, loosing my strength and memory, required her aid at home. She returned to us a clever useful girl, with just principles and a great deal of information in matters of religion. She soon observed how things were going on in

our house, and exhorted us to turn to a better life; and she now frequently rebukes us in a tone of such severe reproach, that even my husband trembles. At first he felt a disposition to destroy her; but it appeared to him as if an angel always restrained his hand, although the maiden voluntarily offered herself to the sacrifice. We have since let her talk on, and are become accustomed to her severe reproofs; still now and then her bitter revilings wring a mother's heart."

"Would you expect to find a lamb in the cub of a she bear?" said Veit, surlily. "Ah! you are a bad brood, one and all. Take care that the canting hypocrite does not one day betray you into the hands of justice."

"That she will never do," observed the mother shaking her head, "I once required her to take an oath to this effect, when she replied, 'if you place more confidence in my word than in my affection, you deserve that I should betray you.'"

"Psha!—Have you heard that your old companion, Paul, the weaver of Bonames, is dead?"

"No, worthy sir," replied the old woman,

"may he inherit the kingdom prepared for the righteous! Paul was one of the best of our people, until he became religious, and brought on his own end by penitence and fastings. My husband has often told me that a blow from Paul was always a death blow."

"It was so," rejoined Veit, "until the fellow turned scoundrel and took to prayer."

"That the boldest and hardiest must die," continued the old woman, "I have too good reason to know; Marten's brave followers are dropping off one by one. Three only remain of the whole number, and the best of these three, the Jew, will leave him next, and that right soon, as my husband bitterly laments."

"The Jew?" exclaimed Veit in astonishment. "What—that most cunning of all knaves, that most undaunted of all assassins, has he given up your service? The base Hebrew, whose fiery scalp is an admonitory symbol of the everlasting burnings which await him on the other side of purgatory. Why it is on his account that I am here. I stand in need of his assistance at this very moment."

"He will be quite at your service if the business can be soon despatched," said the

hostess consolingly. "He is never backward to do a friend service. He is not an acquaintance of yesterday. But after twenty years he quits us for a quieter life. Next summer he intends to marry and go to Worms, to hang his knife upon a nail, and become an honest man. He has collected together a good store of plunder, and his conscience is perfectly tranquil, for it is his opinion that a Jew commits no greater sin when he robs or murders a Christian, than a Christian does when he robs or murders a Jew, and this you know is justly permitted by the law."

"A rare doctrine!" thought Veit to himself, who now began to be impatient for the return of Marten and his companions. His impatience, however, soon subsided, for at this moment a distant clamour was heard, mingled with execrations and piteous cries. The sounds gradually approached, when three sturdy fellows hastily entered the hovel. A familiar nod of recognition from old Marten soon showed that Veit was no stranger at the alehouse beneath the hill. "Water!" cried one of the tall ruffians sternly to the girl, who had now entered the house, when Judith brought him the boiler,

in which he deliberately washed his hands. "Will you not cleanse those bloody stains, Zodiah?" said the maiden turning towards him; "the guilt-spot will not be washed from your soul, though the blood-spot may from your hands—that must undergo the purgation of purgatorial fire." "Silence," cried the Jew, in an attitude of ferocious menace. "It is no wonder that I am silent, because I am in dread of your violence; but why is the voice of Omnipotence mute? Why is the divine arm slack in avenging such deeds of horror!" "Babbler," roared the Hebrew in a tone of boisterous scorn, and then joined his companions, who, however, when the gruel was set before them, evinced the greatest repugnance at partaking of it with the Jew. "Where is Jost?" asked the hostess. Marten shrugged his shoulders in silence, the other bandit waved his hand, but Zodiah answered boldly, "What is there to conceal? He has drank his cup out, mistress. Goi, who would not quit the money, laid him dead upon the earth with a single thrust, but he received what he gave with speedy interest. The fellow fought with the fury of a bear. He thought he could put us all to flight with his

flimsy rapier, but that was not so easy. Wolf whipt his knife through his right hand, Marten held him down, and I clapt a gag into his mouth. We dragged him to the morass yonder, where we left his bones to cool amid the sedges. He will sleep quietly enough upon such a soft bed, and certainly never demand either his money or his jewels."

"God and the tears of the poor man's widow will demand them for him," said Judith, solemnly.

"I will go and pray at the edge of the morass for his poor soul." She then went out, followed by her mother.

"The girl may *say* what she will, and we will *do* what we please," said Zodiah to Marten. "Now out with the booty, and let us make a division; I must go to town to-day, otherwise my master will suspect something wrong." Marten now nodded his head significantly, and cast a glance obliquely towards the Lunenberger, who was sitting quietly in the corner, waiting for a favorable opportunity to introduce his own business. Zodiah said, with a sardonic grin, "the gentleman has been here more than once. You are probably afraid lest he and his accomplices should plunder the plunderers. He is

too staunch a cutthroat ever to belie the proverb, 'honor among thieves.' He knows too that the knife can find its victim as well behind a portcullis as behind an altar."

A partition of the spoil, which consisted of a considerable quantity of money and jewels, was now made, and the best portion taken possession of by the Jew, who nevertheless employed all his cunning to obtain, at a low price, the precious things which had fallen to the lot of his fellow-murderers. Veit, who had seen and overheard all that passed, then advised them to go to rest. "I want," said he, "to have a few moments' conversation with Zodiah," who, however, had already prepared to decamp, by drawing his cap below his ears, and binding a dirty cloth over it, which he tied under his chin; having done this, he made a sign to the Lunenberger to follow him to the door.

Scarcely had Viet mentioned the name of his brother-in-law, when the Jew lifted up his eyes, which sparkled even through the darkness, and exclaimed, "I know the old knave well, and have sworn to be revenged upon him; still I would rather take vengeance on the young one." "He is at a distance,"

said Veit; "await his return, then make away with him if you please, but do the old man's business first."

"And why not?" thought Zodiah, "if I am paid for it! He would have been dead long ago, had I not sworn to strike no blow but for ready money. What is your price?"

"Five pounds of copper—not a doit more—to be paid when the work is done. You know, from experience, that I always keep my promise, under similar engagements."

"Aye, aye, it is all right," said the Jew, after some hesitation, "yet you offer but a scurvy reward for such a service." "What!" rejoined Veit, "for a worn-out life 'twill only be forestalling nature a year or two. You would not have the murder of a toothless dotard to be paid for in gold?"

"But the *death* of this toothless dotard will put gold into your pouch; and therefore I would"—replied the ruffian, with a savage grin,—"make a better offer, and pay something down." "I have named your price, and I am too old a trafficker with your tribe to pay beforehand," replied Veit. "Well, well," rejoined the Jew, "I believe you cavaliers who frequent

the high road more for bread than for recreation, are not overburdened with florins. You must seek them somewhere before you can pay them;—but let it be. As soon as I have settled accounts with the old fellow, you shall hear from me!”

These worthies now shook hands and separated. Veit laid himself down to rest in the murderer's hovel, while Zodiah made the best of his way towards the town. He arrived at the gate about midnight, and, after having paid the drowsy gatekeeper the admission fee, and received his execrations for having roused him from his slumbers, he sneaked away through the dark town into the Jew's street. The door of old Joachim's house was bolted according to custom, but the skilful knave having opened it with an iron hook, relocked it, and crept softly to his miserable chamber, when throwing himself upon his still more miserable bed, the wretch, hardened in crime, soon fell into a sound sleep, which refreshed his bodily and mental powers for new enterprises of blood and plunder.

CHAPTER X.

ONE morning, as Ben David had just got himself ready to go out, Zodiah appeared before him in his holiday attire. His master, in surprise, inquired the reason. "I am come," replied the ruffian, "to ask your daughter's hand. I have now earned the reward which we agreed upon as the price of my labours. The jewel for which I have so long and earnestly toiled, must be mine, according to the pleasure of the divine Elohim, who have heard and recorded your promise in the registry of the eternal Zion. I have for years been obedient to your commands. I have drudged for you—trafficked for you—lied for you—but I will not sigh out the whole of my life under the yoke of servitude. My friends at Worms require my return, and I choose not to return without a wife; delay not, therefore, in giving me your blessing."

Ben David was placed in a dilemma, and after having resorted to every kind of subterfuge in vain, he resolved upon trying what the plain truth would effect. "Friend Zodiah," said he, "since you insist upon hearing the truth, which I would willingly have concealed from you, I shall no longer withhold it. I have reflected for some time past upon your proposed nuptials with Esther, and, after the maturest consideration, I have come to the conclusion that they had better not take place."

"What?" asked Zodiah, in a tone which alike bespoke his curiosity and his suspicions.

"You do not possess her affections," said Ben David, calmly.

"What has she to urge against me?" asked the angry suitor; and began to enter into a long detail of his zeal as a true Israelite, his charitable feelings and his honesty, when Ben David, interrupting him, mildly asked, "Do you boast of your poor labours? The commands of the Holy God are not executed by the fingers or by the lips, but by the heart. The bad English penny is more brilliant than the good one, but it is not on this account the less

false. Zodiah! Zodiah! I fear you are wandering in an evil path."

"How can you upbraid me thus?" asked Zodia, boldly: "You are heaping calumny upon me, in order to evade your promise!"—"We will speak of this hereafter," rejoined Ben David: "First let my daughter decide!—Await my return."

He went out, and in a few moments returned with Esther. "This man," said he to her, "is become your suitor; I will exercise no controul over you; answer me, do you consent to become his wife?"

Esther's cheeks glowed, while tears of joy started into her eyes, and she fell at her father's feet. "Never," said she, "can I consent to be the wife of the man whom I loathe. Never could I become the mother of his children." Ben David raised her tenderly, and desired her to leave the room, while Zodia stood speechless with confusion. "Surely," said Ben David, "you cannot desire to marry a woman who detests you. Here is a more suitable reward—take these twenty silver marks, and quit a house in which you can be no longer welcome. Your

evil deeds are too well known to me, and have caused your expulsion from my family. You know my wishes, therefore depart in peace, and may the Lord be with you! Avoid my doors, for they will be closed against you for ever."

As soon as he found himself alone, Zodiah gave vent to his rage in the most horrid imprecations. "Liar! you shall pay dear for this," he exclaimed, whilst his eyes were lighted up with a glare of the most ferocious determination. "May the blight of leprosy fall upon you—may a curse, to which the ten plagues would be a mercy, turn your gold into dust and your house to ashes! May the worm of anguish be ever at your heart!—may want take possession of your abode!—may your daughter wither ere her prime, and perish with the plague-spot of infamy upon her name!" With these curses upon his lips, he shook off the dust from his feet at Ben David's door, and bent his steps towards the village of Oberrad, where he took up his abode for the moment at the dwelling of a fellow-Israelite.

A solemn stillness prevailed in Ben David's house, after the departure of Zodiah, which was only occasionally interrupted by Joachim, who

significantly shook his head, and made no secret of his disapproval of his son's conduct in having dismissed Esther's affianced suitor, upon a mere suspicion. He declared that such a proceeding would not be approved by the Jewish brotherhood at Worms. Ben David was, however, unmoved by the old man's expostulations. "Would that I were only as certain of paradise," said he, "as I am that Zodiah has trampled upon the laws of his religion! As to the synagogue at Worms, I am here the master of my own house, and shall do with my daughter as I think fit. Let us rejoice that we have got rid of an ungodly inmate."

Ben David's tranquillity was not, however, of long duration, for he soon learnt that Zodiah had not left the market at Franckfort, but was doing every thing in his power to obstruct his gains. His discarded servant forestalled him in every bargain. Wherever any precious stones were wanted, Zodiah was the first to supply them. Nor was Ben David more successful in his loans—the principal source of profit with the Jews—Zodiah presented himself everywhere, and as he had an abundant supply of money, all the dissipated sons of rich fathers

could draw their means of extravagance from Zodiah's purse at much lower interest than elsewhere. In a word, Zodiah's endeavours to destroy his master's trade were in every instance successful. Ben David became daily more and more dispirited, when one day the Jewish physician, Joseph, a proud, but not undiscerning man, having spoken to him concerning his growing melancholy, he imparted to him the cause of his disquiet. "What! Ben David!" said Joseph, with a significant nod, "has prudence deserted you?—Has the wisdom of the serpent been baffled by the cunning of the fox?—What says the proverb, 'Never suffer another to put his head too deep into your bowl!' 'Never teach a pupil your best arts, in order that his *young* wit may not get the better of your *old* caution,' says another. But as the error is committed, do as I advised you long since. Go to Costnitz well provided with money. I have certain information, that the Duke of Austria is in want of considerable sums, for which he is willing to pay high interest. Let the contracts be executed under the seal of privacy, and you may rely upon a very large profit. When you

return, the jubilee days of your ungrateful servant will probably be past; for he who makes a rash beginning, generally makes a rash end."

Ben David thanked his adviser heartily, and when he got home, told Esther that she must prepare for a journey to Costnitz. She received the command with delight, and lost no time in preparing for her journey. Ephraim, a lad from the neighbourhood, who had taken Zodiah's place in Ben David's house, was directed to pay every attention to the venerable Joachim; and the family having past, in domestic harmony, the festival which falls in the moon Shebat, the father and daughter left Franckfort, in company with a large number of traders who were proceeding on the same route. It was thought advisable to join an armed escort, since young Bernhard and Wernher von Keseberg had a few days before declared open war against the whole tribe of Israel, on account of some ill treatment they had received from a Jewish horse-dealer, one Gombracht, at Steinheim. This declaration they had forwarded to Franckfort, duly signed and sealed. Ben David, however, and his beautiful daughter pursued their journey without mo-

lestation, unterrified by the unlawful proclamation. It was, nevertheless, a source of uneasiness to one who dreaded it the more, because he knew the strength and daring of the parties. Zodiah, who had heard of the Kesebergs' declaration, but nevertheless trusted to the knife, which he carried about his person as a weapon of defence, was sauntering one evening on the road between Franckfort and Oberrad. He had heard of Ben David's departure for an indefinite period, and although much rejoiced at the success of his endeavours to injure him, which was sufficiently shown in Ben David's sudden disappearance from the market, yet this success by no means satisfied him. He still burnt with the most deadly feelings of revenge towards him. He little expected, however, at this moment the severe retribution which was about to overtake himself. He had just passed the German mill, when some dark figures sprang out of a ditch, which separates the road from the fields, and surrounded him. Zodiah grasped his knife, but the assailants, having adroitly thrown a noose over his head, instantly pulled him to the ground, when they fixed a pitch plaster upon his mouth ; he was disarmed

in a moment, then bound and dragged across the fields to the banks of the Maine, whence he was conducted, by unfrequented paths, towards Offenbach. It was midnight before they reached this small town; they did not enter, but led their captive to an obscure hovel off the road. Here the two Kesebergs, and Veit, of Hornberg, welcomed him with wild shouts of exultation. "Good evening, Judas," said Weraher, laughing, "we did not calculate upon seeing you in vain. Have you much money about you?" Zodiah shook his head. "We will see," said Bernard; "let us ease him of his burden—that is the least we can do. We know that he has the bond of our cousin, von Hyrzenhorn, to whom he had advanced two hundred florins, which the latter was obliged to offer to the town, together with his house at Wettershausen, as ransom money. Hyrzenhorn chooses to be no longer debtor to a vagabond Jew."

Zodiah fought like a madman with his hands and feet, but was under the necessity of yielding to the superior power of the Hornberger, who being well practised in such summary examinations, ascertained what he bore about him in a

trice, and quickly disencumbered him of every thing but his rags.—He was also about to inflict a deadly penalty upon the Jew, when Bernard humanely interfered. “You are right,” said Wernher; “the scoundrel does not deserve a death at my hands—’twere greater punishment to let him live. Besides, he has often rendered good service to gentlemen of our honourable profession, by giving secret intelligence—he’s a *useful* villain, therefore shall not die yet. Bernard, take the plaster from his mouth—women and Jews must chatter, else their teeth would grow together. Hebrew—how now?—What say’st thou to a feast after this long fasting? Here is bread, cheese, and a sausage made of prime Westphalia pork. Set to.” The brothers and their companion were nearly bursting with laughter at the grimaces of the Jew when he smelt the forbidden meat.—“Eat!” exclaimed the Hornberger, holding his hunting-knife before Zodiah’s left eye: “eat, you mangy cur, or you shall never more see double!” The Jew, knowing that the most serious intentions are frequently concealed under such jokes, took up a bit of the interdicted food and swallowed it, almost choked with

rage. "A wholesome draught should be taken to wash down such a fat mouthful," said the witty Hornberger, who immediately proposed to throw the Jew into the Maine. "Right!" exclaimed Zodiah, with dogged indignation, and excited by ill usage; "throw me rather into the river than oblige me to commit such abominations."—"Down on thy knees, Jew," cried Wernher, "and thank God for thy escape from a watry death."—"We had only sworn," added Bernard, "to take the life of the horse-dealer at Steinhein; and, Zodiah, we wish thee well, because thou art such a practised knave. In fact, we wanted only the bond, which I now burn for the benefit of him who gave it. We shall keep the money which you accidentally carried about you for our trouble. Meat and drink, however, will be allowed you, and it will be your own fault if you don't fatten."

"The law forbids me to do so upon such garbage," replied the Hebrew, sullenly; but as he obstinately persisted in partaking no further of the food of the uncircumcised, Hornberger declared he would run him through if he did not suffer himself to be baptised that very night.

"Excellent!" exclaimed Bernard. "Ay, excellent!" echoed Wernher; "the Jew shall be baptised, and we will be the godfathers."

Zodiah stood by, pale and speechless.—
"Quick!" shouted Veit; "fetch the priest and the bell-ringer; I will in the meanwhile rouse him from his lethargy with my dirk, and teach him to patter his pater-noster—the Ave Maria. I shall leave to the friar."

The two Kesebergs made the best of their way in search of a priest, whom they roused from his slumbers by a loud knock at the door. The holy man started from his bed and rushed to the window; but seeing armed men before his house, he was greatly alarmed, and courteously inquired what was their pleasure. "Out, priest!" exclaimed Wernher; "put on your hood, and I'll lend you a wig; provide yourself with taper, oil, salt, and honey, and hasten to the church. A heretic wishes to be baptised; be quick, lest the evil spirit frustrate his laudable purpose."—"A heretic?" asked the frightened churchman: "baptise a heretic, and so late at night too!—who will answer?"—"Silence!" replied Bernard, "We, the heretic's baptismal sponsors, will protect and jus-

tify thee. Come down without delay—summon the bell-ringer—but if the fellow makes the least noise, or offers to pull the bell-rope without orders, that moment shall be the last of both of you.”

The priest, who well knew with what bold and daring fellows he had to deal, and had grown wise from the knowledge, that several of his brethren had been slain before the altar by an assassin's hand, made no delay in obeying the imperative command. The doors of the little church were speedily opened, and a sentinel placed before them, whilst a ruffian, well armed, guarded the entrance to the steeple. The brothers then ordered the priest to perform the holy rite, by the light of a single taper, upon the half-stupified Zodiah, who had been dragged to the church, and induced, by threats, to submit to become a sharer in their horrible impiety; for villain as he was, he had a most pertinacious predilection for the Jewish faith. The priest, seeing that the sanctity of the church was about to be violated, protested against the proceedings of the three converters, imploring them not to force the wretched Hebrew, who stood trembling before them, with

rage and terror, to the commission of an act he did not comprehend, which he absolutely abhorred, and for which therefore he could not be prepared.

The brothers, however, were deaf to these expostulations, and drawing their swords, entered the baptistery. The priest, terrified at their menacing aspect, reluctantly prepared to perform the ceremony. "The consequences be upon your own heads!" said he, solemnly, and began the service. The unholy sponsors pledged themselves for Zodia, according to the ritual, whilst the passive Jew stood before them like a breathing statue. When the priest came to that part of the ceremony in which the vow of voluntary conversion is to be made by the baptised, the Jew, to the astonishment of all, repeated the words in a firm and distinct voice, made the sign of the cross without trembling, renouncing his former creed, and all who were attached to it. This striking alteration in his conduct quieted, in some degree, the scruples of the priest. The profane act was speedily concluded, and the neophyte received the name of Frederick.

The remaining formalities being gone through

the priest dismissed the party with his blessing. The brothers bantered the hybrid Christian upon his conversion, whilst the demon of malice was busy at his breast. "Go home, honest Frederick," said Wernher to him, in derision, "now thou art a new son of our holy mother-church—grow in the faith, and be thankful to us for having put thee in the way to heaven."

Zodiah was obliged to go on his knees, and kiss the hands of his godfathers, and promise to serve them faithfully when and wherever he should be called upon to do so. He was then dismissed. He set off at full speed, in order to get out of the reach of his tormentors as quickly as possible; but his strength soon failing he sank down upon the snow, overpowered at once by anguish and remorse. There are certain movements in the human heart, which the profoundest researches of philosophy cannot develop. Zodiah had committed robbery and murder; but by these voluntary crimes his conscience was not disturbed. The persons upon whom he had committed them were Christians, the oppressors of the people of Israel; and this, in his mind, was a sufficient palliation.—"Their property," thus he argued, "is given into our

hands, as the peculiar people of the High and Holy One—nay, even their very lives, which are of no more value than those of swine. I only commit a robbery or murder in the sight of the Lord when I assassinate or plunder an Israelite.” The apostacy which he had been forced to commit stung the hardened villain to the soul. Vain, he thought, would be his endeavour to purify himself from the abomination of having renounced his religion for the faith of the uncircumcised. He laboured in vain to persuade himself, that an extorted oath was not valid in the sight of Him who was God only of the Jews. “I am lost!” said he, at length, sighing heavily—“I am no longer a true Israelite!—I have renounced the creed of my fathers!—I have ceased to be of the stock of Abraham! The synagogue of Worms will excommunicate me! The cruel children of Esau will persecute me; but if I must be lost, shall not the impious sons of Amaleck go to perdition with me? Horrid Gojim, I execrate you!—you have robbed me of my soul, and the overflowing cup of my revenge shall be shortly poured out upon you.”

The sinner wandered about the snowy fields,

as if pursued by the Prince of Darkness and the King of Terrors; nor, until the morning dawned, cold and overcast with clouds, did he attempt to seek a shelter. Zodiah now became somewhat more tranquil: he began to think, that his earthly interests might be improved by his change of creed, and that a man, though lost to heaven, might therefore be permitted to enjoy a double portion of happiness on earth. He now resolved to consummate the work of his revenge upon Ben David's house. The deluded man even dared to offer up his impious thanksgivings to Providence for the occurrence of the preceding night, and smiled with the malice of a demon as he meditated his ferocious revenge.

CHAPTER XI.

THE Carnival, which precedes a long period of fasting and humiliation, had now arrived.—Every hand in Costnitz was employed, and every heart was occupied with delightful anticipations of the coming enjoyment. The Emperor Sigismund, who was of a facetious humour, and by no means an enemy to such innocent recreations, added to the general hilarity by taking an active part in the amusements.

Dagobert was no unwilling participator in the sports of the festival. He laid aside his canonicals, arrayed himself in his close jacket, and, putting a green fir-branch in his hat, the symbol of the Carnival, went in search of his uncle, whom he found in his arm-chair, suffering from catarrh and gout.—“See!” said the abbot, scarcely able to conceal his mortification, “see! another unsanctified mas-

querader! This is the way Christians serve the Lord now-adays, by keeping carnival with the devil. These are fearful times. Oh! thou son of perdition! what shall I say to thee? Thy mother will have to expiate in purgatory the crime of having devoted thee to the church."

"I am perfectly of your opinion, my dear uncle," rejoined Dagobert, "yet Carnival, you know, comes but once a year, and surely even an abbot might sin once a year, without much risk of damnation. I am sorry that you are tied fast by the gout. I should have delighted in exhibiting you to your countrymen in all your glory."

"Oh, ye degenerate Germans!" replied the abbot, "who bow down in the house of Rimmon, and scandalize the Lord's anointed, ye are no better than sons of Baal."

Dagobert referred to the tittering Florilla for her opinion, when she replied, that, having seen the emperor pass yesterday under the windows with his retinue, she could not but acknowledge the Germans to be the handsomest of all people in the world.

"Out, gipsy! thou art growing wanton—

cool thy young blood—fie, fie on thee,” exclaimed the abbot, from his easy chair. Dagobert imprinted upon the ruby lips of the fair speaker an ungentle kiss, saying gaily, “Thank thee, cousin!” He again kissed her—“I thank thee on behalf of my countrymen! Wilt thou not charm them with thy company during the revels.”

Florilla excused herself on account of his suffering uncle, whose cheeks already began to glow with anger. “Away, tempter! Away, thou High Priest of the synagogue of Satan!” exclaimed the enraged churchman. “Seduce not the nurse from the patient. Hie thee to Wallrade;—let her flaunt with thee among the sons and daughters of iniquity. I fear, nephew, that thy righteousness is of that ‘scant measure which is abominable.’ I have a word, however, for thy private ear;”—saying which, he drew Dagobert towards him, and gave Florilla a sign to withdraw.

The holy man now inquired whether he had endeavoured to influence Wallrade to marry one of her suitors, when Dagobert replied, that he possessed no longer any influence over her. The abbot then stated what Wallrade had imparted to him in confidence—that the emperor

had smiled at her the preceding Sunday at the grand ball which his majesty had given. The abbot then entered into the advantages which must inevitably accrue from such a connection, not only to Wallrade, but to her relations; that a rich prebend would be the lot of Dagobert, and a mitre conferred upon himself. The spiritual father further observed, that although the emperor could not marry her, she might, nevertheless, contribute to his happiness as his especial friend, until his imperial majesty should be able to discharge his debt of gratitude by making her the wife of one of the magnates of the land.

Dagobert who, during this explanation, had affected great simplicity in affairs of such a nature, now told his uncle that all he had said was as clear as moonshine; still that he was too great a blockhead to be able to treat with Wallrade, even if it could be done *with honour*, to say nothing of participating in an act of infamy, especially too in a place where such transactions—among the citizens at least—were punished with stripes, imprisonment, and sometimes even with death. “Let Wallrade answer for her own acts to God and her conscience; do you

the same, I say it reverently, but leave me to the suggestions of mine. I am too much a German to cast your dice for you. Worthy uncle, I wish you a good day, and a better mind."

Florilla, who was astonished at seeing him come out of the room with flushed cheeks, inquired the reason; when Dagobert replied:—"Cousin, I am ashamed of myself; my uncle has been so kind as to make me acquainted with his *sacred* notions of morality, and would you think I was so much a novice as never to have heard, until he just now enlightened me, that concubinage is a part of its practice? Thanks to the holy man for his pious instructions. I am now going to seek a little recreation, but you shall know more if you will let me have a quarter of an hour's conversation with you about ten this evening, under the window, for I am resolved never to enter my uncle's doors again."

"No?"—exclaimed Florilla, anxiously,—
"Why? what has happened?" At this moment the abbot's voice was heard summoning her to his presence, when, after giving Dagobert a nod of assent, she hastily left him.

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The young deacon returned to the inn, where he found Gerard von Hülshofen, who had selected for him from Tailor Welsner's shop three of the most beautiful masquerade dresses, one of which he was to choose before noon. They were the costumes of a savage, a buffoon, and a huntsman; Von Hülshofen recommended the latter, as the most superb ever sent out of Welsner's warehouse.

Dagobert was amused at Von Hülshofen's rhapsody upon the beauty of the dress, and as the cavalier was unable to partake of the pleasures of the Carnival from the low condition of his pocket, his young friend proposed to hire the huntsman's dress for him, and that of the buffoon for himself, a proposal which so pleased Gerard that he very gladly embraced it.

"I only ask you to be silent," said Dagobert, "and to moderate your joy until Shrove Tuesday. I have an adventure in contemplation. Assume whatever mask you please until that day, but appear not in the huntsman's dress, lest my plot should be marred by your loquacity."

Gerard smiled, reminding him at the same time that he was not an old washerwoman.—
"However," said he, "it shall be as you please.

My friend, the bishop's head cook, has promised me the huge Christopher to mask in, and I shall be satisfied to disguise myself as a saint till Tuesday. But come tell me your intention, dear Frosch."

"Had I thought it prudent," replied Dagobert, "I should have already done so. Do you understand me?"

While Gerard was gone to convert himself into the tall Christopher, Dagobert began to reflect upon the probable issue of his project. "If it be a virtue to liberate the just from oppression, then a blessing from above must attend the undertaking. But am I not sinning at once against my conscience and profession? Am I not acting against my princely friend the duke's views and creed? No! upon this point my heart is tranquil; for I am sure the noble Frederick would do the same were he in my place. I will away to him."

As he entered the court-yard of the ducal palace, he found all the domestics carousing merrily, as it was carnival eve. Not an attendant was to be seen either in the hall or upon the stairs; all were busy with the good cheer which had been provided for them in a spacious

refectory, next to the buttery. Dagobert, being a kind of general guest, went boldly forward to the duke's apartments, when he perceived a man sitting in a corner of the antechamber. A single glance was sufficient to satisfy Dagobert that he was a Jew. "Good gentleman," said the stranger, "I have been waiting here above an hour for the honour of an audience with the illustrious duke, and as the servants are not at my call, although I was summoned to attend his highness here, I cannot presume to thrust myself into the apartment of the great prince of the Tyrol, without being first announced. I perceive that you are one of the duke's confidants; will you, therefore do me the favour to acquaint his highness with my arrival." "Who are you?" asked Dagobert. "A most unworthy servant of the great," replied the stranger. "I am the money-broker who was ordered to attend here to-day."

Dagobert did not reply, but entered the duke's apartment. In a short time, the money-broker was summoned into the ducal presence; and as he lingered at the door, making low bows and complimentary speeches, Dagobert passed behind him, thrust him in, and

shutting the door after him, remained in the antechamber.

The duke was seated at the upper end of the apartment, in an easy chair, rubbing a beautiful spaniel behind the ears. The abject behaviour of the Jew made a disagreeable impression upon the prince, who told him to lay aside his mean humility, as he required only the respect of a man, not the servility of a dog. "Your name is Ben David, I think? In the letter which was presented to me yesterday, from the respected elder of Hoffstatt, you have been warmly recommended to my notice, and we shall now see whether you deserve the confidence which I would willingly repose in you."

Ben David had already commenced a most extravagant eulogium upon the illustrious house of Hapsburg, when the prince commanded him to be silent, and abruptly inquired, "What is that on thy face, Jew; it looks like a scar, but I suspect you never fought under a banner. How came you by it?"

"Most gracious sir," replied Ben David, with emotion, "I obtained it in defence of my sons. Your highness must recollect a diet held at Franckfort about eighteen years ago,

attended by a great concourse of princes, among whom Duke Leopold, of Austria, shone like the morning star."

"I do," said Frederick, with animation. "Austria shone on that occasion like the sun himself, in whose effulgence that of all the stars together is eclipsed. But tell me—what acquaintance had you with Leopold?"

Ben David here related how on that occasion two Jewish boys, having had the curiosity to penetrate into the court-yard of the imperial inn, and being attracted by a costly saddle-cloth, with golden tassels, laid hold of it in boyish admiration, when one of the baggage escort, perceiving them, cried out, "thieves!" and the poor children expiated their innocent freedom by receiving a severe scourging. In vain they appealed for mercy. Their father, who happened to be passing by, hearing their cries, looked into the court-yard, and beheld his own children writhing under the lashes of their inhuman tormentors. He rushed forward to their rescue, when a thrust from a sharp knife laid him prostrate, his face covered with blood. I am that father!"

"Rise old man," said the duke, "I remember it well."

Ben David now proceeded to extol Duke Frederick's humanity, in having saved his children. "Great sir," he continued, "I have learnt from your illustrious example that there are noble Christians. It was your gold which first made me rich, and I promise you, on the integrity of a Jew, that all which I have on earth, is your's."

The duke, weary of Ben David's adulations, for he even kissed his highness's feet, observed with a sneer, "I suspect your integrity is much the same as your forefathers who sang hosanna to the Messiah, and then put him to death." The Jew, anxious to change the conversation, affected not to have heard him, and said, "Most gracious duke! My father, who numbers one hundred years, has done much good in the world, but the only reward he has received, is a hoary head and trembling limbs. Recompense me, noble prince, on his behalf, or use your gracious influence with the emperor—I seek nothing on my own account."

The duke, looking at him with some surprise, asked, "Why should I or the emperor

reward you for the good deeds which your father may have done ? ”

Ben David smiled, then bowing with the profoundest humility, replied, “ If your eminence will not recompense me for the *good* my father did fifty years ago, why force me to pay for the *evil* my forefathers did upwards of fifteen hundred years since ? ”

Frederick was startled at this unexpected retort, but summoning his self-command, turned from the question, and mildly asked Ben David what had become of his sons ?

The old man laying his left hand upon his breast, and heaving a deep sigh, replied, “ They have caused me many pangs. The elder is alive, but dead to me. He has connected himself with the oppressors ”

“ I understand you,” said Frederick, “ He has turned out to be a wise Jew, and sought protection in the bosom of our church. He is indeed to be commended, for it is even better to be a bad Christian than a good Jew.”

“ May the Holy God forgive him,” solemnly ejaculated Ben David. “ He is now teaching the Hebrew tongue in the High school at Heidelberg.”

"May he prosper," added the duke, "but what became of the youngest?"

"Peace to his memory!" exclaimed the father with a stifled sob, and his eyes directed towards heaven: "He was killed four years ago at Budweis, when the Christians massacred the Jews in that town."

Frederick turned towards the window to conceal his emotion.

Ben David having wiped a tear from his scarred cheek, submissively asked the duke what service he could render him?

Frederick replied that he should probably shortly require five or six thousand silver marks. "Can you procure me this sum whenever I may have occasion for it?"

Ben David assured him, without the least hesitation, that it should be ready for him at any hour.

The duke having enjoined the strictest secrecy, now entered upon the subject of interest and the bond for repayment, when the Jew assured him that he would take neither, "for," added he, "without meaning to offend your highness, all that I have in the world—my money—my jewels—nay, my very life, are at

your service, together with my gratitude and blessing."

The duke was considerably incensed that such a liberty should be taken by a worthless Jew with the dignity of an Austrian prince. He therefore told the old Israelite that Duke Frederick was no needy adventurer, who sought assistance in his necessities. "Do not imagine that I will accept gratuitous services from a Jew. Name a reasonable interest and it shall be paid. When I require the money see that it be ready." So saying he haughtily dismissed the Jew, who retired with his usual humility. Dagobert came in just at this moment bearing a weighty golden candlestick, in which were three flaming tapers, that instantly flung a stream of glorious light through the apartment, which completely dispelled the gloominess of a cold winter's eve.

"I imagined," said Dagobert, "that your highness was engaged with the Jew upon some experiment connected with the transmutation of metals. I thought your conversation would never be at an end."

"Do not think it strange," rejoined the duke, "that you, who are a *new* connexion, should

have been obliged to give place to an old one. We often find a use in plants which grow in the mire, and this Jew is not the worst of his tribe. He might put some Christians to the blush. But how happens it, young friend, that you are here on the first day of Carnival? Shame on thee. Away to the audience-chamber, where the emperor will distribute rings and necklaces to the beauties of the festival. You will find more amusement there than with me. Can I serve you in any way?"

"Why may I not learn the accomplishments befitting a cavalier?" asked Dagobert. "My heart palpitates with indignation at the thought of skulking about in a hood, while you make such a dignified appearance, are covered with honours and blessed with a brilliant fortune."

"You made not your own choice," rejoined the duke, "your mother's vow decided for you—let that be your consolation."

At this moment a band of hornblowers, kettledrummers, and pipers, was heard in the street, followed by a number of torchbearers. The emperor went before them on foot, surrounded by ladies of distinction, with whom he

was tripping it merrily, amidst an immense concourse of masks, and greeted with the shouts of the multitude.

“By heavens,” exclaimed the duke, “my old master used to tell me much about a Roman emperor, who so far forgot his own dignity that he played the mountebank upon a stage before the assembled citizens. Oh! that strangers should be witnesses to the folly of his imperial majesty. Is this the champion of the Christian church? If heaven does not defend her he never will. How it grieves me to see a brave nation at the feet of a contemptible juggler. Believe me the whole race of the Luxemburgers are worthy of no better praise than I bestow upon him. His father Charles possessed neither courage nor any other noble quality; he therefore could bequeath none to his sons. Sigismund is just what might be expected from the son of such a father; he is cowardly, vain, fond of idle ceremony, and although not absolutely prone to inebriety, he is nevertheless a gross voluptuary, while his artfulness and duplicity are altogether unworthy of an emperor. He entertains towards me the most implacable feelings, but I respect as little as I fear him.”

The Duke here paused, smiled graciously, and said in a mild tone, "Come nearer, Dagobert, and sit down by my side," at the same time pointing to a stool near his own easy chair.

Few commoners could boast of having enjoyed the honour of being seated in Frederick's presence, and Dagobert had not until now been one of those few. He felt, therefore, flattered by his patron's condescension, and having readily obeyed the invitation, the latter resumed: "Probably I may have shocked you, by speaking thus harshly of the emperor? Tell me candidly, have you not formed some expectations from Sigismund, who, as I well know, is wooing your sister? Your uncle has suffered a word to escape him now and then, and has almost declined further service about the holy father, in order that he may the sooner gain a cardinal's hat from the emperor, whose influence at this moment is all paramount. So say *you*, no doubt. The conduct, however, of Wallrade, who is endeavouring to draw the weak sovereign into her snares, has made a considerable impression upon many people. The corrupt part of her own and of our sex, envy both *her* and Sigismund. The more

moral despise her, while those who have been smitten with her charms, and encouraged by the allurements which she held out to them are now overcome by rage and despair. At the head of the former is Herr von Königseck, as vain a fop as ever trod on German ground; while Count von Montfort is at the head of the latter. The despair of the effeminate coxcomb is ridiculous; but the rage of the daring Montfort is quite another thing. He has communicated his disappointment to me, as I favoured his wishes for Wallrade's hand. He has sworn to me that he will be revenged, and he is no trifler. Warn your sister, therefore. She may ridicule Königseck's threats; but Montfort's vengeance will overtake her secretly and silently, if she continues to provoke it. She had better therefore be upon her guard."

Dagobert assured the Duke, that Wallrade had always affected to be wiser than himself, and that he should therefore decline giving advice to a person so overbearing. "She may reckon upon the assistance of my arm," said he, "should she require, however little she may deserve it; but as for giving her advice, it would be scattering good seed upon a rock."

The duke praised the young deacon's spirit, whom he considered as endowed with qualities better befitting a valorous knight than a reverend friar.

Dagobert, flattered by the duke's opinion, determined to render himself worthy of it. Frederick, placing his fingers upon his lips in token of secrecy, took him by the hand and courteously said, "The time will come, and sooner probably than you expect, when I shall require the assistance both of your arm and head, if you will have no objection to employ them in my service." Dagobert assured his highness that both should be ever at his command ; when, after a courteous acknowledgment, the duke dismissed him.

CHAPTER XII.

"WELL, how do you like me?" said Gerard to Dagobert, in the afternoon of Shrove Tuesday, when they were both equipped in their disguises. "Shan't I make a famous wild sportsman? And I'll stake my silken doublet against a woollen gaberdine, that you will turn out to be the wittiest merrry-andrew that ever played the jack-pudding at a carnival. We shall cut a figure wherever we appear."

"Heaven forbid!" replied Dagobert. "Don't make yourself too conspicuous; be careful to throw your mantle about you, so that you may be well concealed."

"Give yourself no concern about that," replied Gerard; "I will bite the dust at the next tournament if a soul in Costnitz knows any thing of the Alpine sportsman. It was another thing with Christopher. I wear my sword under this

mantle—it is as sharp as a pair of shears—and woe be to the ribs of him who shall venture to make acquaintance with it.”

“Right!” replied Dagobert: “and now let us sally forth among the masqueraders, whose gay habiliments but too often hide sorrowful hearts,—Come, bold huntsman of the Alps—to the field.”

The two masks were greeted, wherever they appeared, with loud acclamations. The whole town was a scene of the most joyous festivity. Groups of fantastic figures displayed their various antics, and contended for the applause of the spectators; many of whom became the objects of their drollery. All classes had but one object in view. The vassal walked by the side of his master—the maid of her mistress. All distinctions of rank were for the moment confounded. Nobles became beggars, and beggars nobles. Old women became blithe maidens, and blithe maidens old women.—The order of society seemed to have been inverted.

Dagobert found it no easy matter to prevent his wild companion from betraying himself through his disguise. Gerard asked him if he

had not seen an ugly satyr peeping out of the window, on the ground-floor of a house hard by. Dagobert replied in the negative. "What!—nor the lovely creature who stood smiling near him? An angel and demon in most unnatural conjunction."

"Peace, mad-cap," rejoined Dagobert, "thou art in one of thy waking dreams." "The devil take *you*," retorted Gerard, "for a mad dreamer, and your humble servant for a very reasonable man. He was no ugly *vision*, believe me, but a villainous ill-favoured *reality*. Had not the knave appeared too genteel, I should have thought that he had been the fellow at Worms, who——"

"Welcome, wild huntsman!" exclaimed a knot of masks, who suddenly surrounded the astonished Gerard: "we have been long waiting for you!" The two friends now found themselves in the midst of a troop of giddy women, dressed as dryads, hamadryads, and huntresses—some with green sprigs in their tresses, others with bows slung over their shoulders, quivers of arrows at their backs, and hunting spears in their hands. "How could you suffer Waldine to wait so long for you?"

exclaimed the leader of the sylvan band, who had a sparrow-hawk perched upon her wrist. "Come with Dame Holda Waldine." "Aye, come with us," echoed her merry comrades. "Huzza! brave woodman! away! away!"

Gerard was astounded; and in spite of his resistance, was borne away in triumph by the fair wood nymphs. Dagobert now dashed among a motley crowd of several hundred masks, which, moving slowly onwards, presented a brilliant spectacle. The well-fatted Carnival, reposing on a sledge, amidst hams, sausages, and wine-flasks, was preceded by Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday, the grandees of his empire, decorated with draperies of divers colours. The brave Eckart preceded them with his white staff and long silvery beard, dressed in a mean gray garment. Dagobert's piercing eye was not slow in detecting Count Montfort, whose dorsal curve, but ill concealed beneath a loose frock, identified him under the mask. He was not long in detecting other acquaintances too among the followers of the faithful Eckart. A high carriage, containing many seats, gradually elevated above each other, was drawn by eight white horses, splendidly capa-

risoned. The animals were led by eight handsome youths, arrayed in oriental costume, their brows surrounded by garlands. Two gigantic savages held the reins, seated at the feet of several beautiful boys, who were dressed in rose-coloured silk, wearing silver ribbands round their heads, armed with golden bows and well-filled quivers. Behind sat three attendants on the queen of love. Above these, enthroned under an azure canopy, radiant in celestial beauty, reclined the lovely Venus herself. She was surrounded by a numerous train of damsels, gorgeously attired, whose charms were only second to her own. Dagobert readily recognised his sister in the heathen goddess, and he justly concluded that the affected cavalier by her side, could be no other than the coxcomb von Königseck.

Dagobert now approached Count Montfort, and said, "You are the faithful Eckart, who gives warning to every one, but takes no warning himself. Listen for once to a friendly soothsayer, and fly from the false Venus!"

Before the count could look round at his unbidden monitor, the latter had ascended the triumphal chariot, and placed himself be-

tween the beautiful Venus and her cavalier. "In the bower of love," said he, in a feigned voice, "folly is the queen-flower; it withers almost ere it blooms, and then only exhales the foul odours of corruption. How do'st thou like the sight of Eckart, magnanimous Tannhauser? Don't flatter yourself that the lady Venus is true; she is as light as the sea-foam, from which she derived her beauty, and you will soon fall from your present proud elevation, like the faithful Eckart." Tannhauser was disconcerted, but Venus, giving him a contemptuous look, turned towards Dagobert, and said, in a tone of derision, "The fool meddles with every thing, but knows nothing." "At all events," rejoined the wag, "I can tell you something to which you are no stranger. Do you know why the train makes a halt just now? Because it is under the emperor's windows. Do you know why your left eye takes every now and then an oblique glance? Because the emperor is sitting on the terrace. Beware of crown and sceptre, Tannhauser;" "and you," added he, whispering in Wallrade's ear, "beware of Eckart's jealousy!" "Impertinent fellow!" muttered Wallrade; but immediately returning the emperor's salutation,

with a tender smile. "You are under excitement, Madam Venus," said Dagobert. "Listen to me—folly is no cure for the heart-ache, and the heart is sometimes as hollow as the tooth." Wallrade looked intently at the glazed eyes of his mask, and thought she could discover a more than ordinary sympathy in the buffoon, which she, with her natural predilection for tyranny, endeavoured to turn to her own advantage. "As you pretend to know every thing," said she, "what was it which excited me?" "You saw at that window," replied her interlocutor, with an air of confidence, "a woman, whose beauty may bear a comparison with your own." Wallrade knitted her brow. "You are not one of the most polite fools in the world," she replied, with some asperity, "but tell me, who is that woman with the beautiful child in her arms?" "Ask me not," replied Dagobert, jocularly. "Speak, I command you!" said the anxious Venus. "The beautiful woman is Madame von der Rhön!" replied Dagobert, bawling with all his might in her ear. "Villain," exclaimed Wallrade. "What's the matter?" asked Königseck, interposing between them. "Only a discovery, good

Tannhauser," replied Dagobert, laughing in his face. "Nothing more! Farewell!"

So saying, he sprang down from the carriage like a colt. The wagghery of the common people was now heard on all sides; and was chiefly directed against the pursy friars and sanctified nuns, who, enjoying the privilege of leaving their cells this day, were rambling through the town, with little regard to decorum, vieing with the seculars in licentiousness and impiety. They could not wholly conceal the class to which they belonged, and frequently these gay conventuals were pursued with clamours by the multitude.

Dagobert, coming from his uncle's house, suddenly fell in with Gerard. Aided by a flame arising from a pitch-pan, he recognised his great coat, hat, and mask, and cried out, "What! have I found thee again; art thou Gerard, or art thou not?"

"And who else should I be?" asked the merry huntsman, seizing Dagobert's hand with a familiar grasp, and resting his body, which was become unsteady from the wine he had drank, upon the latter's shoulders. "This is young Frosch," continued he,— "The devil

take me or the young churchman with him, down into the stews below!"

"Drunkard, what are you saying," whispered Dagobert, as he drew him aside from the press, "you had better take a trumpet and proclaim me from the house tops. Whence do you come, sot?"

"From Paradise," replied Gerard, gaily, "from Paradise! while you, surly Cerberus, are from hell's gate! I come from among the houris, snapdragon. Long live Dame Holda Waldina, her fair daughters, and her delicious wine!"

It soon came out that the easy Gerard had fallen into any thing but respectable company. He had been revelling with a troop of travelling courtezans, with which Costnitz abounded during the time of the carnival.—These unholy syrens had calculated upon seducing within their toils no less a personage than the emperor himself, of whom a report had gone abroad that he was to appear at the carnival in the disguise of a wild huntsman. The hope of obtaining a considerable present from the illustrious prince had determined these frail sisters to pay him a visit, attired as ladies of

distinction, and to entertain him as elegantly as circumstances would permit. Gerard's mask deceived them as the false report had already done, and the truth was first discovered in the saloon of the inn, in which a costly supper had been provided by these licentious demireps. Their distinguished guest, Gerard, laughed at their disappointment, told them a long story of his family and property, drank their wine, finally escaping with an empty pocket, but a full head. "Tell me now, once for all," said he, concluding his account of himself, "whether I have not kept my word like a man? Here I am again standing by your side. Ask me what you please. I would stand by Lucifer himself, if he took any pleasure in being connected with me."

"That I believe from my heart," replied Dagobert, "for your body is the habitation of a whole legion of devils—your's is in truth an unclean spirit! But as you are a stout cavalier, you shall have the management of a business which, if successfully concluded, will bring a blessing upon your head."

"You are speaking German," said Gerard, "which is as unintelligible to me as Latin;

may I be choked with fasting if I understand a word on't. 'Tis no matter—though my understanding is weak, my arm is strong. Only tell me what I am to do;—by the powers I'll do it in spite of the emperor."

"First of all," said Dagobert, as he drew him aside into a little dark lane, "take your hunting knife in your hand."

"What?" asked Gerard, "you do not wish me to cut your throat?"

"Silence!" replied Dagobert, peremptorily: "Cut off the buckles from my cloak and cap, as quick as you can."

"A curious whim!" rejoined Hülshofen:—"to make your friend turn tailor in a dark lane—mind, you must blame yourself if I cut the seams."

While Gerard was hacking at the buckles, Dagobert made a noise like the whirring of a quail over a bean-field. This signal had not been long given before two men approached, dressed in loose surtouts:—"Welcome!" said one of them, in a foreign dialect: "The hour is arrived." "How goes it?" asked Dagobert. "Well," answered the other, "the business is done! Peter will open the door." "Good,"

replied Dagobert, and went forward. "Is that the man of whom you were speaking?" asked one of the strangers, in a low voice, pointing to Gerard, who was patiently trotting after Dagobert. "It is," rejoined the other. "Good," answered the first speaker, who, with his companion, followed their conductor until he passed into a narrow lane, and stopped before the gate of a convent. Not a sound was heard. "Keep strict watch here, at the entrances," said Dagobert to Gerard; "we have something to do within. Should you hear a noise, cover our retreat. Strike the cowardly wretches, who may oppose you, a good blow behind the ears with the blade of your knife. But only wound them in case of necessity. We shall meet again at the inn."

Gerard gave a ready assent; and having planted himself upon the little stone bench close by the cloister-gate, patiently awaited the issue. Dagobert in the meanwhile knocked gently at the wicket, and upon being asked by a peeping friar his name and business, replied—"We are carnival friends." The bolts were hereupon drawn back, when a lusty brother of the order came forth and saluted them. He

held a small lamp, while a huge bunch of keys was suspended from his waist. His cheeks were inflated and red, his mouth trickling with fat porridge, and his little deep-set eye beamed with the gladness which the wine flask had inspired. "Woe to me," said Dagobert, in a low voice, to his attendants, when immediately the youngest of them stepped up to the gate-keeper and addressed him thus: "These, Friar Dominic! are the friends of whom I spoke to you yesterday; and here is the purse which shall be your's upon fulfilling the stipulated conditions." The gate-keeper gave an equivocal smile of assent, placed the great bolt before the door, and then hummed over the first verse of the popular carnival air. "Will you not step into my apartment," added he; "it is warm there, and we can speak further of these matters."

"Are we met to bandy words?" asked Dagobert. "What does the marrowy friar mean?" His companions made signs to him to be silent. "*Ad edendum nemo serus!*" continued the monk, holding his fat sides: "Will you not be seated, my worthy friends! and I'll pledge you in a draught of consoling wine."

He raised an enormous flask to his lips, and having taken a potation long and deep, wiped the mouth of it with his sleeve, and handed the flask to his neighbour.

“Bibit ille, bibet illa,”

sung the reverend monk. “Drink away gentlemen, ’tis of the very best.

“Bibit servus cum ancilla.

That’s well! drunk like holy Christians. Now what are your commands?” “Ha! Dominic; have you already forgotten what we agreed upon?” asked one of Dagobert’s companions, while the young deacon audibly exclaimed, “Sheepshead!”

The inebriated friar drew down the corners of his mouth at this unflattering cognomen, but immediately forgetting the offence, continued singing—

“Bibit abbas cum priore.

“Hem, if I am right . . . hem! hem!

“Bibit coquus cum factore.

... What was I going to say ... help me out a little, gentlemen !... .

“ Et pro rege.”

“Thunder and lightning?” exclaimed the hot-headed Dagobert, interrupting him, “we wish to pay a visit to the poor captive whom you keep in custody, in order that we may give him a carnival present.” “You have chosen the best opportunity,” said Dominic, stammering, “the prior and most of the gentlemen are out in the town; and the rest—hem! are setting over head, gaming and carousing like jolly conventuals, and have something better to do than to trouble themselves about an accursed heretic, to whom you wish to pay an honour of which he is not deserving.” They were now conducted by the staggering monk through several winding passages to the bottom of a narrow spiral staircase, at the top of which a low door, heavily cased with iron, opened through an immensely thick wall, and the visitors were told to creep through the narrow aperture.

“ Bibunt primum et secundo.”

hummed the friar, while this was going on, and then called out into the deep-vaulted dungeon, "rise up from your straw, apostate—

"*Donec nihil sit in fundo ;* ^

and do you, gentlemen, take care of yourselves."

Dagobert shuddered at beholding, by the glare of a lamp, the frightful prison, in which an unfortunate, with a long matted beard and in squalid attire, was groaning under an unjust sentence. "Father John!" exclaimed the young deacon's companions, and threw themselves at the prisoner's feet bathed in tears. The latter raised himself up with some difficulty, in his fetters, from his humid bed of straw, and held his hands before his eyes, that were dazzled by the light to which he had been so long unaccustomed. He had, however, heard the well-known voices, which poured a tide of joy into his heart seldom felt in such a frightful abode. "Are you not Count Ehlum and Herr von Lanzenbrock?" inquired he, with a voice tremulous from emotion. "Ah, my unhappy friends, what can have brought you into this dungeon?"

The friends sobbed aloud, while Dagobert

listened anxiously at the door, where the friar was keeping guard. The reverend sot had seated himself by the side of a lamp placed upon the threshold, and had been counting over his unhallowed gains, when, overcome by the lengthened debauch, he had fallen asleep. "Father Huss!" said the count, "we are come to liberate you! Make haste, say not a word, but do as I request. Disguise yourself in this garment. It is wide enough to conceal both you and your fetters. We have entrusted this young man, who, under the mask of levity, conceals the most manly disposition and an ardent love of justice, with our secret, and he has undertaken to bring you safely out of the town. He is acquainted with all the bye-paths around the country. He and Lanzenbrock will accompany you over the lake into Swisserland, whence you will be conducted home by friends who are faithful to you.—Fly, fly! time presses."

"Am I dreaming?" asked Huss, looking around him with astonishment. "Is my situation then so dreadful that flight becomes necessary?"

"You have every thing to dread," replied

Lanzenbrock; "you are in danger of loosing your head."

"And what must I think of the danger in which those friends are placed who remain behind me?"

"Let not my fate concern you!" said the count, interrupting him. "The freedom of our church, nay, the liberty of our consciences, depends on you. Thousands of my countrymen can fight as well as I can; but who among them can use the weapons of eloquence and argument like you?"

"Rely upon us, dear sir," added Dagobert, "we are honest in our intentions, and fortune is to-day propitious; to-morrow it will be too late."

"And who has led you to imagine," said the prisoner, with an expression of mild dignity, "that I should be of a different opinion to-morrow from to-day. My sentiments are like the God from whom they emanate, 'The same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.' I should be a traitor to those sentiments and the doctrines which I have preached, were I cowardly to leave this dungeon. The word is eternal, and must gain the victory. I am devoted to the Lord, who will protect me from the sword of

the oppressor and liberate me from the fetters which now load my body, when his work shall be accomplished?"

Dagobert, impatient at such fanatic obstinacy, stamped with his foot, when the Bohemians surrounded Huss and entreated him with tears to escape. His resolution began to waver; the voice of friendship sounded in his ears like an angel's song and shook his resolution; the thoughts of liberty began to crowd upon his imagination, which had well nigh lost its energies amid the dreariness of his dungeon. He had already seized the garment which was to secure his escape, when a noise was heard over head. The sound of footsteps resounded from the bottom of the stairs, accompanied by voices in loud colloquy, shutting of doors, and an indistinct clang of arms. "We are lost!" whispered Lanzenbrock, in alarm, while Dagobert became furious with rage. "Obstinate man," he exclaimed, "you have sealed your own doom. Whoever has the courage to follow me let him do so. An opportunity may still offer for escape!"

This challenge, which was delivered with all the energy of a noble and resolute spirit, was

instantly answered by his companions. Huss conjured them to escape, and leave him to his fate; when, upon the clamour becoming louder, they rushed, with the speed of a hunted stag, out of the vaulted dungeon. The prisoner himself awakened the friar, who had fallen fast asleep, and warned him to lock the door in order that he might not have an opportunity of making his escape. The besotted Dominic shook his head at this singular request, and having cautiously locked the door, slowly descended the staircase. In the mean time all was uproar below. The cause of this unreasonable disturbance was found to have arisen from Gerard, who, dosing upon a stone bench before the cloister, was suddenly roused by two drunken friars reeling home to their cells. Remembering the promise he had made to prevent all egress from the gate, he thought he should be doing equally right in preventing these inmates of the cloister from returning to their dormitories. "Nobody can pass here," said he in a gruff tone, as the monks approached, at the same time placing himself before the entrance in an attitude of defiance. The monks, although overtaken by surprise at the moment, soon per-

ceived that they were two to one, and insisted therefore stoutly upon their right. From words the parties soon came to blows. The monks endeavoured to push aside the bar of the portal by force. Gerard, however, drove them both back. The commission of this outrage upon the holy functionaries of the church, provoked a fresh attack, which was also repulsed. Gerard, in order to make his threats more effective, drew his sword; upon which one of the monks retreated from the weapon, and uttered a piercing cry, while the other sprung forward to the alarm bell, and rang for some time, thundering at the same moment with his hands and feet upon the door, before Hülshofen could drag him from the threshold. This noise at length drew the attention of the banqueters in the refectory, as well as of the servants in the ante-chamber, who were playing at dice. The former cried out for help, while the latter ran towards the passage dragging their huge halberds after them. Not one of the men, however, had the courage to open the bolted door to assist the ill-treated priests. One cried out for the prior, another for the porter. The former however had not returned from the city

revels, and the latter was nowhere to be found. The butler, suspecting that their holy superior might be concealed in the cellar tapping a forbidden cask, was making the best of his way to the convent wine-stores, when three masks suddenly leapt from the stairs and threw him to the ground, together with the lamp which he held in his hand, and forcing their way through the trembling monks and menials, speedily gained the gate. The bolt was soon drawn back, when they instantly darted out. "Stop," cried Dagobert, in a thundering voice to Gerard, who nevertheless ran off. He was, however, soon pursued by the inmates of the cloister, while the two companions of Dagobert contrived to effect their escape. The wild huntsman flourished his sword among the crowd of monks and lay persons who poured in a stream out of the building. "Keep back, ye simpletons!" exclaimed he, "keep back, or ye are dead men." "What, attack the church's guardians!" halleoed the two holy revellers who had raised the uproar. "He has drawn the sword upon our blessed order, and is excommunicated both by the emperor and the church." A large posse of the sacred band now attempted to

rush upon him. "Keep back, drivellers—back, I say, ye living puncheons; I am the emperor myself," cried he, elevating his voice, "and you shall rue this insolent temerity."

This swaggering failed not of its effect. The servants drew back in silent terror, the priests became dumb with astonishment, and Gerard, assuming a mock dignity, walked off without further molestation. No such honourable retreat, however, was reserved for the young deacon, who had been overtaken by the servants of the convent, when his companions had escaped; he, however, soon managed to release himself from their grasp, ran off, and suddenly entered a gateway, thus baffling their pursuit. He had not remained long concealed, when perceiving a person slowly open the door of a house close by, with a lamp in his hand, he sprung forward, seized him by the collar, and threw him with tremendous force into the arms of those who were following him. While they were questioning him concerning what had happened, Dagobert slipped into the passage, for the lamp had been extinguished in the scuffle, and entered the lower room of the house, in which he found a man and a woman. "Help!" exclaimed

he, "I am in jeopardy—protect me—if you betray me—if there is vengeance on this side hell, I will have it;" and without waiting for an answer, he entered an inner chamber, the door of which was open, and crept under the bed. The unexpected sight of a man masked, occasioned no small surprise to the inmates of the room; they had, nevertheless, formed their resolution before his pursuers entered. "For the sake of the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob," said a person, with a sigh, who was now dragged into the apartment, "my most amiable host! will you not bear witness that I am Eliezer, the son of tall Schmul, who has been physician to his highness the Margrave of Baden? Do I not gain my bread honestly; and do I know any thing of the wicked Samaritan, who threw me down and trod upon me without my even perceiving whence he came?" "Hold your tongue, timid Jew," said one of the conventuals, "we are not in search of you; but from your host, turning towards the latter, we desire to be informed if a stranger be not concealed in the house? Confess it, Ben David, and bring not yourself into trouble."

"May I die unblest, if I know whom you

can want," replied Ben David, coolly. "I have, indeed, heard that a man ran by my door, but he never entered it. Is it not so, Esther?" "In good sooth, I cannot gainsay it, father," replied Esther, with perfect self-possession. "We shall soon see," cried the persevering official, seizing the candle; "There is no believing you vile Jews. You are of your father, the devil, and he is the father of lies."

He then took the light into the inner room, but upon finding every thing in perfect order, he returned satisfied that his prisoner had escaped. At this moment a servant, who had been stationed before the house as a sentinel, seeing a person staggering homeward, who had been making merry at the carnival, sprung upon him, crying out, "I have secured him. Help, brothers, help!" when the whole band, rushing out, surrounded the imagined malefactor, who was mute with terror, and dragged him away to the convent; thinking that even should he not turn out to be the right man, they might nevertheless obtain something from him as a compensation for their ill success.

In the mean while, Dagobert lay upon the ground almost worn out with impatience and

exhaustion, awaiting the end of the scene, when Ben David announced to him that the danger was past. Creeping from his hiding-place, and taking the mask from his face, he was not a little astonished at finding his protector to be the very Jew whom he had introduced to the duke. "One good turn deserves another," said the Hebrew. "You appear to have undergone great anxiety. Your persecutors are now afar off. Come, therefore, take a glass of wine, if you feel no repugnance in accepting refreshment from a Jew. Esther, give me that polished flask from the corner!"

At the mention of this name, Dagobert's emotion, which was scarcely exceeded by that of the fair Jewess herself, nearly betrayed his secret to the unsuspecting parent. The glasses and water had nearly fallen from Esther's trembling hand, when Ben David relieved her of the burden; observing, "What a pity it was that the alarm she had suffered for their young visiter's safety, should have rendered her incapable of presenting him with the refreshment, as it would have been, no doubt, more acceptable from the hands of a young maiden than from those of an old man. However, worthy sir," he continued, "whoever should present it to

you, could not do so with more sincerity than I do."

Dagobert took the glass, and with his eyes fixed upon Esther, drank off the contents, as if her happiness and his own were mixed up in the very beverage. Esther, upon her father reminding her of the hour, made a modest inclination to Dagobert, who returned the salutation without a word, and retired. Ben David then invited Dagobert to take possession of the sofa for the night. "Fortune has been kind in permitting me to make you some recompence for the services you have rendered me. You are a confidant of the duke, and that is a sufficient guarantee for the nobleness of your character, as his highness admits none but the worthy into his confidence. Whatever you may require in the way of loan, address yourself to me. All that a poor Jew can do for you shall be done." After having whiled away half an hour with Esther's father, Dagobert took his leave, with the promise of shortly repeating his visit. Under mixed feelings of astonishment, pleasure, and regret, he returned to his lodgings, threw himself upon his bed, but sleep was a stranger to his pillow.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE table of the verderer, Bilger Von Rhön, was but moderately supplied, nor were the guests numerous, yet the air of contentment which beamed upon the countenances of both husband and wife, as well as on that of their child, converted the meagre fare of Lent into a luxurious Whitsuntide banquet. It was a beautiful day, about the latter end of February. The sun shone brightly through the windows of the castle of Mörsburg, upon the little circle of the verderer, who was listening to the lovely partner of his destiny, as she entered into a minute detail of the late festivities at Costnitz, in order to amuse their little daughter, who was sitting upon her mother's lap, deeply interested; while even Haltan, the bull-dog, as he sat before the table, appeared to participate in the tranquil pleasure of his master and mis-

tress. A noise in the court yard below interrupted the interesting relation, when hastening to the window, Von Rhön beheld several servants dressed in the emperor's livery. Some were on horseback, while one held a white stallion, with a skin as sleek as an eel's, and whose rich trappings indicated at once the rank of his rider. The enigma was soon solved, for upon the door springing open, the emperor entered in person, in his simple riding-coat, and immediately dismissing his attendants, with that condescending familiarity which was so natural to him, took his place at the table, and entered into conversation with the verderer and his wife. "When I visit friends, I like to banish all constraint," said Sigismund, "and I think I am among friends."

"Your imperial majesty," said the verderer, "is indeed among the most faithful of your servants."—"I wished at once to convince myself of your well-doing," continued the emperor, "and to see how this charming lady conducts her little establishment."

The verderer's pretty wife blushed, while Bilger replied, "Gracious sire, I can answer you in a few words; I am happy—my Catha-

rine is the cynosure which diffuses a blessed influence over my destiny, and our little child has made us both twice blessed.”—“Persons of your condition,” observed the emperor, “can scarcely know what misery is. You are happy within the narrow circuit of your own neighbourhood, while I am obliged to encounter calumnies in distant cities. Willingly would I exchange conditions with you. At the late carnival, an impertinent masker thought proper, in a very unpleasant affair, to give himself out for the emperor, and has thereby subjected me to very degrading suspicions. Though the head of the most holy Roman Empire be the first personage in Christendom, he has also the greatest cares; and therefore I shall take it as a favour if your amiable consort will oblige me with a glass of wine, that in drinking to your health, I may drown all unpleasant recollections.”

The verderer's lady rose to obey the wishes of her illustrious guest. The emperor, in the mean while, took the little girl, who had fallen asleep, upon his knee, and drawing his chair near the verderer, whom he obliged to continue sitting, resumed, in a low tone, “Bilger, there

is a noble lady, in whose fate I am much interested, who wishes to pass some days in close retirement in this house, being threatened, as she fears, with danger at Costnitz. It is the duty of every cavalier to protect the weak, how much more then is it the duty of an emperor, who is master over all the cavaliers in Germany. The lady will arrive this day; and I must expressly forbid all inquiries concerning her. Her name and rank must remain unknown to you and your household. I confide her to your protection, and recommend her to the kindness of your lady, as I suppose she will leave her servants at Costnitz, till the danger by which she is menaced shall have subsided."—"Whatever your imperial majesty commands shall be done," replied Bilger, submissively; which put the emperor in such good humour, that he emptied, at one draught, the glass which Catharine now poured out for him, drinking to the prosperity of the house of Von der Rhön.

Indeed!" said the verderer, smiling: "it is high time. I am the only remaining member of my family, and it must cease to be perpetuated, if my good lady does not gladden my heart with a son."

"You live in hopes, and emperors do no more. But now, my worthy host, let us mount our horses, and ride to meet your fair guest."—The emperor having embraced Catharine, and placed a costly gold chain which he wore round the neck of the slumbering child, took his leave. The verderer rode on his left hand; but they had not proceeded far when a sedan, escorted by several horsemen, appeared in sight. The leader of the train, who was dressed in a motley but rich garb, his horse, quitted within a few paces from the emperor, and approached him with the profoundest respect. "What!" my friend von Königseck?" exclaimed Sigismund, in a tone of affected astonishment: "how happens it that you have ventured into the frost? What beauty are you protecting in that close sedan?"

"It is my bride, most gracious sire," he replied: "she has expressed a wish to pass a few days in the house of your majesty's verderer, whose spouse is nearly related to her; and I considered it to be my duty to offer her my protection on the road."—"A most efficient protection, certainly," rejoined Sigismund, "and therefore the more disagreeable to me to ob-

struct the fulfilment of so delectable a duty; but I must despatch you this very night upon an important mission, which I dare only intrust to one of your profound wisdom and un-failing experience. You must, therefore, return immediately in my retinue to Costnitz. Let the welfare of your betrothed be your least care; for it providentially happens that the verderer is now in your presence, who will answer to you for the safety of his wife's relative:—will you not, brave Von der Rhön?"

"With my head!" rejoined Bilger, who, from submissiveness to his master's will, entered into an engagement which he little knew the difficulty of fulfilling. Königseck, however, continued undecided. The sedan approached. "Am I heard?" exclaimed the emperor to the hesitating Königseck:—"Mount and away!" The alarmed lover put his foot slowly into the stirrup. "Is this your loyalty?" said Sigismund, stroking his beard. "I could not have supposed you to be so indifferent towards your prince. Montfort was much more alert when I ordered him to-day to ride on my service to Franckfort. He scarcely allowed himself time to hear mass, but was off like a meteor. He is nevertheless

fully as devoted to the fair Tyrolese as thou art."

This news at once decided the backward cavalier, who had been fluctuating between duty, love, and jealousy. "God preserve your majesty!" exclaimed he, "as Montfort has left Costnitz, I will readily ride off in your service; for now I know that my beloved is secure from his threats. Yet, sire, you might allow me a parting word."

Sigismund gave him a hasty nod of approval, and having whispered to the verderer, that no one should be allowed access to the fair stranger, galloped off, without even turning his head towards the sedan, which, in the mean time, was brought close to the forester and Königseck. The latter gently opened the curtain, behind which sat a female, covered with a thick veil—spoke in soothing words of the emperor's wish—of his ready but painful acquiescence, and the grief he felt in being unable to attend her to her destination; at the same time introducing Von der Rhön as her future protector—"Farewell, then, accept my thanks, Von Königseck," was spoken by a voice which sounded ominously in the verderer's ears. "I

am perfectly satisfied with my new conductor," continued the speaker; when a countenance which filled Bilger's heart with dismay peeped from behind the transparent curtains of the sedan. Bilger reeled upon his saddle as soon as the well-known features of Wallrade caught his eye. The young lady saluted him with perfect composure; gave her hand to the departing bridegroom; carefully closed the curtains when Königseck rode off, and the train moved on towards Mörsburg. The heart of Von Rhön palpitated like that of a dying criminal. He rode behind the train, and cast his eyes towards heaven, in vain seeking for consolation, and silently imploring resolution to meet the evil which appeared about to overtake him. "This meeting bodes no good either to me or mine," thought he, with a sigh. "I dread to think upon the result. Unhappy wretch that I am! that I should bring mischief into my own house, and plant destruction upon my own domestic hearth!"

Catharine received the new comers with friendly hospitality. Wallrade returned her salutation with equal kindness, and familiarly took her arm, whilst they proceeded to the sit-

ting-room, in which a simple meal was prepared. "In truth," said the fair guest, in a tone so full of softness and gentle blandishment, as to recal past emotions of tenderness in the breast of Von der Rhön, "I know not, noble lady, how I can excuse myself for this intrusion upon your domestic arrangements." Wallrade was perfect mistress of all those more refined arts of dissimulation, which secure a favourable bias to first impressions, and she was not therefore long in winning the confidence and admiration of her fair hostess.

Catharine offered her every kind and delicate attention, which she received with the most flattering acknowledgments; and began to caress the child, which had just awakened. Bilger silently observed all this, and began to rejoice at the auspicious commencement of a visit which he had so much dreaded; though this joy in fact amounted to no more than the hope of a better issue to the event than he had at first dared to anticipate. It was late when they separated for the night. Catharine attended her guest to her chamber, while the verderer threw himself into a large easy chair, and mused with no agreeable forebodings upon

the probable events of the future, by the glare of a solitary lamp. His wife's absence, though but of a few minutes' duration, appeared to him almost interminable; and, when she returned, he sought to read in her countenance those emotions which he conceived were kindled in her bosom. Catharine could not find words sufficiently expressive of the charming deportment of the fair stranger and concluded by acquainting her husband that their guest expected to see him in her apartment on the morrow, in order to confide to him a commission of high importance. At this announcement the hitherto pale countenance of Von der Rhön instantly glowed with a deep crimson, as if the fountains of his heart had been diverted from their natural channels, and suddenly propelled into his cheeks. Catharine could not avoid observing this rapid change of colour.

What is the matter with you, dear Bilger?" asked she, with deep concern: "are you ill?"

The verderer, with a confused smile, endeavoured to ridicule her anxiety, begged her to retire to rest, and that he would shortly follow. As soon as she had left the room, he extinguished the lamp, and descended into the court,

which was illumined by a clear moon, then just beginning her march down the cloudless hemisphere, and whilst absorbed in the most distressing reflections, he heard two male voices in earnest discourse. "How can Bertram talk in that way?"—"He is as close as an oyster," was the reply. "The surly porter informed me that the little gate was opened to no one after nightfall."—"But is she not in the castle?" inquired the first voice.—"Without doubt," replied the second, "the verderer conducted her thither."

"The devil!—if I have been made a fool of," said the former speaker, in a surly tone: "her little note was couched in words as sweet as honey, but even honey may be drugged with poison."

"Indeed it may, count," said the other, "and she has not been the first woman who has led a brave cavalier for miles by the nose."

"If she has deceived me she shall rue it," said the count, fiercely:—"to-morrow must either remove or confirm my doubts. If all access to her be then denied me, I shall know what conclusion to draw, and can use my sword to avenge my cause whenever it may suit me."

If the emperor had not returned, I should have thought she took a pleasure in prolonging the carnival with us, but may I sink to endless perdition if I ——”

The words here became inaudible, as the speaker moved away, and his retreating footsteps soon died away upon the verderer's ear. “And must I be silent before such a woman?” said Bilger, as he ascended the stairs to his apartment;—“I must! Cruel destiny, which has bound me in fetters that Death alone can loosen. Heaven, if I am to be a sacrifice—spare, oh spare my wife and child!”

He stretched himself upon his couch, and closed his eyes, but sleep forsook his pillow.—He tossed as on a bed of thorns; every thought pierced like a dagger into his bosom; and yet when the morning began to dawn he dreaded the light of day. He counted the hours with feverish anxiety until the moment arrived when he was to appear before his guest. It was only after repeated exhortations on the part of his wife that he proceeded to Wallrade's chamber, at the door of which he knocked with a trembling hand. Upon entering he found her sitting near the stove employed on a piece of embroi-

dery. She returned his salutation with a slight bow. The verderer drew near, and, in a faltering voice, inquired her commands.—“Guess,” replied Wallrade, “what has brought me hither.”

“Could I venture,” replied Bilger, “to believe what you spoke yesterday evening to me, to Catharine, and the child, I should hope that you came here on a mission of peace; but if the friendly disposition you then expressed was only a mask to hide bitterer feelings, then I have the greater cause to fear for my own tranquillity.”—“An evil conscience needs no interpreter,” said Wallrade, with a malicious smile: “but I am not so ill-disposed towards you, Bilger, as you suppose. I come to afford you an opportunity of expiating your sins at once. The fulfilment of a trifling wish is all that I require at your hands; and I promise, should you fulfil it, never to trouble myself more about you, nor the woman whom you call your wife. However, without entering into further discussion, listen to what I propose. A suitor will come here to-day or to-morrow to demand my hand. He is distinguished by a sharp eye, a dark countenance, and high shoulders. In one

word it is Count Montfort, whom I have reason to dread. He wooed me, and flattered himself with final success; but being disappointed, he vows mortal vengeance against me. An unprotected woman, I must, sooner or later, fall a victim to his implacability, unless I can counterplot his malice; and I have therefore determined to draw him into a snare which he shall not escape, if you lend me your assistance. The emperor has intrusted you with the care of me; execute your office faithfully, and secure me from molestation by this ruffian's death. This alone can tranquillize my heart; and by this service only can my hostile feelings towards you be appeased.

Bilger paused for some moments in almost stupified amazement, and then, turning his sorrowful eyes on Wallrade, said, "Is it, then, not sufficient that you have sought my house to make it the scene of your treachery—but must I be made the detestable instrument of a deed from which the heart of any but a monster must recoil with horror? Must this hand be dyed with the foul stain of murder, to glut your sanguinary revenge?"

"And whose hand is it that I require to do

this deed?" asked Wallrade, with a look of haughty scorn!—"Is it not mine own? I bargain for no hireling's hand, so long as I have a slave which I can command. The man who has sworn vengeance against me must not be allowed to live to execute it! Once despatched, you may rely upon an entire oblivion of the past, and no interruption to your future peace. Refuse, and you are undone. I will bring disgrace and death upon you, with infamy and woe upon all who belong to you!"

"Poisonous worm, who hast gnawed the fairest blossoms of my life," exclaimed Bilger with indignation, "remember that the deepest humiliation has its limits. Do your worst, I am still a man, and defy you. I will no longer tremble at the threats of a woman I detest. I was appointed to be your guardian, not an assassin in your pay. The duped emperor, who has no suspicion what a demon's heart the brilliant casket of your beauty conceals, does not expect that I should damn my soul to win a harlot's smiles. But he shall hear me: at his feet I will confess every thing. He will not cast me off; and, with his pardon, I defy the utmost of thy malice."

"His pardon ? Driveller ! Is he not at my feet ?—Is he not my slave ?—Can I not mould the pliant trifier to my will ?—Does he not lay aside his imperial duties in order to pay his homage to me in this retirement ? I have only to say one word, and thy neck will quiver under the headsman's axe. Dolt ! my breath can seal thy death-warrant ; and thou, once with the worms, thy Catharine will be taken to the lazарhouse and thy child will wander through the streets begging her bread.

Bilger uttered a piercing cry and reeled against the door, which had been bolted, and was at this moment burst violently open, when Count Montfort abruptly entered—" I wish to see," said the count, in a tone of impetuous rage, " whether any door in the castle can be closed against the family of Montfort, who have a free entry into the palaces of the Hapsburghers. Von der Rhön, you have placed some very uncourtly sentinels at your gates. The fellows presumed to refuse entrance to a man of my condition, although I have been called hither by the dictates of honour and affection."

" They had their orders and obeyed them,"

replied Bilger, coldly. "So much the worse!" said the count. "As soon as I have spoken with this lady I shall have a word to say to you. Remember—this fair gentlewoman is your guest, not your dependant, I therefore do not comprehend how you dare place yourself between me and my bride."

"Your bride?" said Bilger, with a scornful smile. "This is however a matter which concerns me not, I must nevertheless insist that you play the suitor out of this castle. So long as this lady is under my protection, I shall neither allow intruders to approach, nor rejected wooers to molest her."

The count bit his lips, and turned towards Wallrade. "Speak, give the villain the lie from your own sweet lips," said the indignant suitor. "Suffer not a Werdenberger and your lover to be insulted by a base-tongued forester. Speak, is it not with your approbation that I am here? —Did I not come from your own invitation?" Wallrade cast her eyes upon the ground like a bashful bride, and gently replied, "I am now subject to the austerity of a man in whose presence I dare not speak. Freedom of speech

is denied me here, and whilst that person (pointing to Von Rhön) is my gaoler, I must be silent. When I am at liberty I will reply to you without reserve."

"By our holy mother!" exclaimed Montfort, shaking his head; "your speeches are as unintelligible as the oracles of the Sibils. One thing is clear to me, that you are more a captive in this fortress than a guest; and when I call all things to my recollection, Luxemburg artifice has evidently much to do with it. It is now sufficiently evident why I was sent to Franckfort? Out of my sight, base pander!"

This gross insult so incensed the verderer, that he seized his sword; but a moment's reflection cooled the rising ebullition, and his angry feelings soon subsided into contempt. He laid hold of Montfort's arm, who was drawing his rapier. "Put up your sword," said he; "to hazard one's life in defence of a virtuous woman's honour is a most noble action; but the blood of two brave men would be dishonourably spilt in a brawl excited by the malice of a disappointed maiden."

"What is the meaning of these words?"

asked the count, furiously. "The malice is your's, which would destroy me and the honour of my future wife."

"Rash man!" said Bilger with vehemence, "you know not what a woman you solicit. Accuse me not of malice. I have laid no snares for you. She, whose hand you so urgently plead for, has enticed you here in order that I might become your executioner; but I refused to be the instrument of her ferocious revenge. She is deceiving you, Königseck, and the father of his people. Her life has been one dark tissue of falsehood, fraud, and crime. Never has her stony heart been accessible to one tender emotion. I know her but too well. Beware of the serpent's coil. 'The poison of asps is under her lips.' She will laugh at you while she stings you; she will taunt you in your agonies, and then throw herself into the arms of another, for whom she is artfully digging a grave by the side of your's."

Bilger's pale lips quivered as he spoke, while Montfort was evidently affected by the solemn earnestness of his manner. He fixed his eyes in silence upon the speaker, and, retreating a pace or two from Wallrade, said, his counte-

nance darkening while he spoke, "What a monster you have been depicting. 'Tis so, Von der Rhön, your words are sooth. Wallrade's silent lips and pallid cheeks confirm the horrid truth. She stands before me with the Gorgon's heart within a seraph's bosom, but I have no sympathy for the mute appeals of detected guilt; they excite me only to revenge, and I will now see if her blood be as icy as her heart!" saying which, the infuriated Montfort rushed upon Wallrade, sword in hand, who uttered a piercing shriek, and flew towards the window. Trembling with afright, she clung around the detested forester, who had thrown himself between her and her enraged lover. After a severe struggle, the count, who was the weaker of the two, was obliged to desist from his murderous intent, and to obey the will of the conqueror, who, considering it to be his sacred duty to protect his guest, desired Montfort instantly to quit the castle, nor longer violate the emperor's commands.

"Well!" said the baffled wooer, panting for breath, and fixing his piercing eye upon Wallrade, whose features betrayed a strange mixture of rage, terror, and malicious menace, "I

respect the orders of the sovereign, but not the sovereign's prostitute. Tremble woman! when next we meet, my vengeance will not be so easily eluded. Remember that love turned to hatred is the most furious passion of the human breast; henceforth it will have sole possession of mine. Take heed!—the curse of infamy will fall upon thee yet." With these words he rushed from the chamber, sprang upon his horse, and dashed at full speed over the castle-bridge.

Bilger would now have quitted Wallrade, but she forcibly detained him. "Hear me," said she, bitterly; "you have exhibited me in the blackest colours to my enemy. Heaven may pardon you, but Wallrade never. Your hours are numbered. I shall shortly give you over to the executioner, your paramour to infamy, and your offspring to bereavement."

"Woman!" exclaimed the verderer with vehemence, "do with me as you will, but spare those who are dear to me. Spare them, or, by the heaven which now smiles above us both! I will strangle you on the instant."

Wallrade was terrified, and drew back. "Well then," said she, "fly from your home,

but quit it alone; let your name and memory perish; become as one dead; then will I be silent, satisfied that you will be lingering out your wretched life on a foreign soil, with the bitter recollection that you have a widowed wife and orphan child wandering upon the high way of the world destitute and unbefriended; but you must be gone before sunset. Make your election! Either become a fugitive like Cain and live, or remain and perish with your family."

In a delirium of agony, Bilger quitted the presence of his embittered enemy. In the extreme excitement of his feelings he had not heard the horn announcing a fresh visiter, who was at that moment ascending the stairs. It was the emperor. On his right walked the unassuming but anxious Catharine, who looked with an expression of the deepest concern at her agitated husband. For Sigismund was no longer the affable prince of yesterday, but his eyes were lighted up with the fire of offended pride, and probably too of jealousy. He scarcely deigned to look at the verderer. "You come very late to receive my welcome," said he sternly to his astonished servant; "I am at a loss,

too, whether to look upon you as an intrusive voluptuary, who would plunder forbidden fruit from another's garden, or as a detected pander!"

"As a"— "Yes!" interrupted Sigismund, "as a detected pander, I have said, and shall not gainsay it; for, but this moment Montfort, forgetful of his duty, has left the castle. Seek not to justify yourself, but quit my presence instantly. Your wife will attend me to the apartments of her guest."

The emperor turned his back upon the astonished Bilger; and Catharine, participating deeply in the wounded feelings of her husband, submissively followed the prince.

Bilger staggered down the staircase, and found Preyswerck, the emperor's buffoon, sitting below. He had been his master's only male attendant during his visit to Wallrade. Preyswerck endeavoured to arrest the verderer's attention by some drollery, but the miserable man past by without noticing him, and hastily entering the room in which his child was playing, repeatedly pressed the little innocent to his bosom; then threw himself upon an unsaddled horse, and left the house like a devoted fugitive.

The reflection that fresh fuel would be added to Sigismund's anger, by Wallrade's representations, made him urge his horse to his full speed; not so much to place his own threatened life in security, as to ensure an opportunity of vindicating his own honour and his wife's character, and of promoting the future prospects of his child.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE memorable session of the council, at which the deposition of the three popes was decided upon, being concluded, the spectators, as well as the members, were returning to their respective homes. Dagobert, attired in his sacerdotal robes, was among the number, when, sauntering leisurely through the streets, on a sudden he felt his right hand heartily squeezed, and upon turning, Gerard was at his side. "Welcome, old comrade," exclaimed Dagobert, agreeably surprised. "Hast thou again crept from thy dark forest, wild huntsman? How comes it to pass, that I see thee standing before me in a whole skin?"

"How?" said Hulshofen, importantly; "bow down with all due humility before me, thou reverend suckling—young sprinkler of holy water! and reverence me for virtues which you

never supposed me to possess. I remained three whole weeks in a dark recess, which is neither visited by rain nor snow, clouds nor sunshine; during which time, some grim savers of souls—God preserve me—whom I had assumed the unhallowed liberty of belabouring, wished to roast me, because I had taken it into my head to be his imperial majesty at an improper time. I played, however, a prudent part, observed a discreet silence, and to-day I have been set at liberty by order of the emperor, together with a number of persons, who either owed their detention to a carnival brawl, a love adventure, or cruel creditor. My good fortune led me to stumble immediately upon you, from whom I at least expect a good supper, with plenty of malmsey to wash it down, as a reasonable indemnification for past services—such a supper, mark me, as has not tickled my palate since I eat of the emperor's venison."

"Happily," replied Dagobert, "the inn is close at hand. Come in, eat, drink, and be merry. What, ho! there, host and hostess, maids and waiters, prick up your ears—make ready for the bravest champion on the Rhine, who wishes to sup like a friar after Lent."

Gerard took his place at the table with a ceremonious importance, when lights, wine, and glasses were instantly placed by his side. Dagobert took a pride in pouring out for his thirsty guest the flavoured produce of the vine hills of Baden. The hostess soon brought in the plates and dishes. "Now, my old comrade," said Dagobert, whilst Gerard was fastening the napkin under his chin, "you are sitting like an emperor at a coronation feast. To say truth, your beard might have been closer shaved, and your vest less begrimed, but your talent in demolishing the produce of mine host's larder makes amends for all other deficiencies." Gerard set to earnestly, thrice drained the foaming glass, thrice found at the bottom a piece of money, minted with the arms of Venice. He pressed the hand of the donor with gratitude, and said, "I am pleased in finding such a wholesome sediment—may my wine ever be drained from such lees. But are you not making too great a sacrifice to liberality, for I know that your purse is not so well filled since you turned your foolish back upon the good abbot, your uncle." "Fear not," replied Dagobert, "Duke Frederick has permitted me

to draw upon him now and then in my necessities. You may, therefore, be grateful to him for your present supply."

"Oh! I have all possible reverence for the duke," said Gerard, his countenance brightening as he spoke. "There was a time, indeed, when we did not stand upon the best footing, but this is gone by. We are now reconciled, and I therefore the more readily accept his bounty."

"Reconciled!" echoed Dagobert, with a laugh. "What have you to do with the Hapsburger, who likes you about as much as the mastiff likes the badger."

Gerard assured him that his highness was by no means unfavourably disposed towards him, for he had caused him, on account of his bravery and skill in fence, to be invited by Braunfels to attend the tournament, to be given by the duke on the 20th of March.

"Enviably man!" exclaimed Dagobert, offering him a bumper. "The great of the earth are aware of your merits; you have, therefore, only to keep your right arm sound, and your body well nourished."

"If I take care of my body, my arm will

take care of itself. Let me see; how long before the 20th?"

"Five days, brave comrade," answered Dagobert. "Till then be my guest; you shall feast like a cardinal. Elated by the generous juice of the German grape, you shall no more remember those innocent days, when a lank and lubberly boy, you placed your lazy feet under your father's table, and consumed whatever was to be had, indifferent alike whether the ravens had brought it from Heaven, or your father had collected it from the road."

The merry feaster dropped his glass, raised his eyes towards Heaven, while a mixture of painful and agreeable recollections rushed upon his mind. "My dear Frosch, you have just hit it: my righteous father—rest his soul!—died like a true gentleman. Do me the favour to join with me in a bumper to the memory of that respectable man."

"With all my heart!" replied Dagobert; "I would drink to the health of an honest man, were he even in purgatory. And to your's no less, bold German, because you honour your father's memory."

"As you will your's, who has just exchanged

his sheriff's seat at Frankfort for an angel's seat in Heaven."

"Are you mad or drunk?" asked Dagobert, incredulously.

"Neither! I speak sooth. Hear, and thou shalt learn further. When I came out of prison, I bent my first steps towards Frankfort—"

"To the point," said Dagobert, impatiently.

"While I was proceeding leisurely towards the city, I met the town clerk, who, after a courteous salutation, inquired if I had heard the news.—No, replied I.—The good elder and sheriff, Diether Frosch, said he, was murdered on the evening of Saint Felicity, close by the deer market."

"Murdered?" exclaimed Dagobert, horror-struck at the intelligence.—"Confusion to that tongue of thine which could conceal from me such an appalling event:—but tell me how was he murdered?"

Gerard, who felt somewhat concerned at his young friend's agitation, replied—"You ask me about what I know as little as yourself. Probably this letter will afford you further information. Von Braunfels charged me with it, enjoining me to deliver it to you, but I had

forgotten it till this moment." He now drew a well-sealed packet from his sleeve, and gave it, leisurely, to Dagobert, who seized it with eagerness. "There," continued he, "is the letter, in which your father himself gives an account of the whole matter."

"My father?" asked Dagobert, in astonishment.—"By heavens," he continued, looking at the superscription, "it is his own handwriting! Thou profligate wine-bibber! how could'st thou alarm me thus? Thou may'st thank thy stars that I have no weapon by my side, otherwise this moment should be thy last!"

"Friend Frosch," resumed Gerard, "what is the matter with you? Is this your gratitude for the good services I have rendered you?"

"Were I not so truly serious at heart," said Dagobert, "I could laugh at thy stupidity. Why, man, thine eyes are dimmer than a mole's. —Did it never occur to thee how a man could write of his own death?"

"Forgive me," dear Frosch, "I am more stupid than a gander. Your father is not dead, that is certain; nevertheless you will see from the letter that something dreadful has happened to him." Dagobert was about to break the

seal when he looked again at the superscription.—“No! the letter is for my worthy uncle,” he exclaimed. “The good man would excommunicate me if it came defaced into his hands. I must now leave you, however painful to me, to disturb the abbot’s evening repose, as I cannot remain until the morrow in a state of such tormenting suspense.”

The holy father was not a little surprised that the tranquillity of his house should be disturbed at so unseasonable an hour by a loud knocking at the gate, and could scarcely believe the report of the servant, when he announced the arrival of his master’s nephew. The timid priest, who began to apprehend the abduction of his fair ward, summoned her to his presence, and she had no little difficulty in dissuading him from assembling round him the whole of his establishment.

“Excuse this late visit, uncle,” said Dagobert, as he entered. “My business with you is short, but for that reason the more pressing.”

The abbot retreated a few paces as Dagobert put his hand into his girdle to take out the letter, and could scarcely regain his tranquillity, even upon the assurance of Florilla that it was

only a harmless piece of paper, and not a murderous weapon, which his nephew presented to him. Dagobert was obliged to open his uncle's fingers and lay the letter between them, with the request that he would make him acquainted as speedily as possible with the contents.

The abbot began to wax wrath. "*Perdio e la santissima vergine!*" exclaimed he, "am I to be intruded upon in this manner by an impertinent rakehell? Is this your respect? What means this stormy attack upon me, which might have occasioned the death of a man less holy and less fearless than myself? To bring me a letter which might be read as well to-morrow as to-day."

"It may be so, uncle, but I cannot help it—my anxiety must be my excuse. My father has met with an accident; read the letter without further delay, and let me know the worst."

"What have I to do with your anxiety?" asked the abbot, angrily. "Why am I to read the letter without delay?"

"Because it concerns my father," rejoined Dagobert, warmly: "to be sure he is only your brother—God send him a better; but, to

make the matter short, I will not leave your house until I know what has happened to him."

"Look at the unsanctified railer—how his face glows—he is as terrible as a hobgoblin. Whether he is mad or drunk, no uncommon thing with your German boors, 'tis difficult to say. Should he grow rabid, St. Maurice deliver us!"

"Grant him his request," said Florilla.—
"What springs from filial love can have no unholy motive."

"As you please, sweet maiden," rejoined the abbot, softening. "Give me my spectacles, and set me a light in the antechamber. I shall have much ado, with my poor purblind eyes, to decipher these abominable German characters, as cramp and crooked as a gouty toe—and I cannot bear that yonder pert popinjay should witness my infirmity. Entertain him, in the meantime, if you are not afraid of him." So saying, he hobbled out of the room.

"Why are you so grave," said Florilla, kindly, to Dagobert. "Have you any new trouble? Do you remember the night when you came under my window, and related to me that your

beloved of Franckfort was at Costnitz, and that you had seen and spoken with her?"

"I cannot have forgotten it; for scarcely three weeks have elapsed since it occurred;—but what has that to do with my having new troubles."

"As you once made me your confidant, I will now make you mine. From the moment you communicated to me your love for the Jew's daughter, I felt an anxious desire to behold the woman who had rendered you insensible to my friendship. I was not long in discovering her abode; and, under the pretext of changing Italian money for German, I made my way to her father. My youth and flattery rendered me agreeable to the daughter; and upon my declaring that I still worshipped the God of the Jews, and revered the Sanhedrim, she induced her father to desire my more frequent visits; and by repeating them, I soon gained the unlimited confidence of Esther."

"Is it possible!" exclaimed Dagobert, in surprise.

"Why went you no more to Ben David's house?" asked Florilla. "I frequently stole away from hence to wait for you by Esther's

side. Many an evening have I longed for a visit from you under my chamber-window, in order that I might make you acquainted with what I had discovered—but you came not. Esther and I both waited for you in vain. What a number of charming qualities are united in this astonishing girl! You know not the fragrance of that blossom, which you so foolishly forbear to gather. Away with your idle prejudices—renounce the hood, and marry her.—You love the woman, but detest her race; while she loves you—and for your sake the enemies of her faith and of her kindred.—Esther would die a thousand deaths for you—while you would not resign one moment of your life for her!—Is there no country where your mother's foolish vow is unknown? Fly to it—Esther will follow you thither—she will abandon the creed of her forefathers, which you, though unwittingly, have taught her to despise, and acknowledge that which is already dear to her, because it is your's. Unite yourself, then, with Esther, and be happy.”

“ And do you reckon as nothing a deceived father's curses, which would accompany Esther in her flight? And would a parent's execration

be nothing to me? The contempt of the world—the malediction of the church—the severe judgments of conscience—and finally, the dreadful moment of meeting above, when my mother would ask me—‘Son! how have you performed my vow?’—Would these be nothing? I thank you, Florilla, for your advice; but, God be praised! I have a safer adviser in my own breast. Let the matter rest; and let us listen to what my uncle, whom I hear approaching, may have to communicate.”

The abbot now entered. His countenance was agitated and his step faltered. “Speak, for mercy’s sake!” exclaimed Dagobert, with tremulous anxiety: “tell me what has happened?”

“The Lord has still preserved him!” replied the abbot, seating himself. “My brother lives, and will soon, with God’s blessing, be restored; but he has had a miraculous escape. A few nights since an assassin met him in the street and stabbed him: fortunately, the weapon was turned by the chain which he wore about his neck, and only pierced his flesh obliquely. Ere the ruffian could repeat his thrust, some persons approached, and he escaped. The

wound was happily slight, and in a few days the elder will be able to resume his official avocations. Now," continued the abbot, "my brother has expressed a wish to see his family once more united around him, and therefore requires me to accompany you and Wallrade to his house, to celebrate his recovery."

"My good father is acting perfectly right," observed Dagobert, "although my sister deserves not his love, because she is not able to value it. What conclusion do you draw from all this, most venerable uncle?"

"Hem!" ejaculated the holy man, after a few dubious shakings of the head: "I think that it will be quite sufficient for me to offer my thanks to the Lord, for my brother's recovery, in my quiet apartment at Costnitz, while you can attend your sister to your father's house."

"By no means!" said Dagobert, as he rose from his seat. "Wallrade needs not my escort. One of her numerous wooers will gladly undertake that pleasing duty. Who knows but his imperial majesty himself may consent to be her travelling master of the horse. I leave it to you, uncle, to prepare your amiable niece for the journey. You, certainly, are better ac-

quainted with her present residence than I am, who only hear reports now and then, which do no honour to the name of Frosch. I will readily cede to Wallrade the priority in my father's house, and endeavour that the day of my arrival and her departure shall be the same. Your blessing, worthy sir—and a good night.”

CHAPTER XV.

Nothing could exceed the magnificence of the preparation at Costnitz for the approaching tournament. Early on the morning of the 20th day of March, the works being completed, persons from the neighbouring country poured, like a living deluge, into the city, which speedily overflowed with a dense and anxious population. The spacious arena was enclosed by high railings, painted white and red; while the banners of Austrian Tyrol, Orgau, Thurgau, and other towns and places subject to Frederick's rule, were fixed at equal distances, and fluttered in the breeze. The emperor's throne, erected in the form of a general's tent, and composed of embroidered cloth, reared its silvery cone, decorated with plumes of hern feathers, above all the adjoining erections, while superb velvet cloths, covered with arms, mottoes, and figures

of animals fell over the railings, and reached the ground. Every entrance to the arena was guarded by horsemen, wearing silver cuirasses, with the morning star affixed on the lower part of the sleeve. The prizes, which consisted of gold and silver ornaments of costly manufacture, weapons of curious workmanship, and tigers' skins of great size and beauty, were displayed with much pomp in a space before the arena.

The musicians were already at their posts, and as often as any new coat of arms was brought forward, in order to be examined and hung among those of the other candidates, the trumpets, kettledrums, and zinks, struck up their martial melody. It seemed as if heaven itself took part in this magnificent display, which was to be followed by a still more superb spectacle, as one of the most beautiful days ever seen at the Lake of Constance, ushered in the festivities. The sun spread his enlivening rays over land and water. The light wherries, filled with curious spectators from the opposite banks, danced merrily upon the lake, the roads around the town were crowded with horsemen and pedestrians, hastening to the

busy scene, while the streets appeared as if they were paved with human heads.

While the lists were surrounded by anxious spectators, and the health of the munificent duke was drunk in the neighbouring taverns and booths, which were thronged with company, the generous Frederick was in his closet, overwhelmed with business. At one moment the master of the horse came to receive his orders,—then the high steward—he was followed by the marshal of the tournaments, who required a fresh supply of money—and last of all came the keeper of the privy purse, with further demands upon the prince's bounty, who immediately issued the necessary orders, that the most liberal disbursements should be made.—Scarcely had he dismissed these visitors, when a new one was ushered into his presence by the page in waiting. “Hah! Dagobert!” exclaimed Frederick, agreeably surprised; “we have been waiting for you, good soul! But what are you doing in that black hood? I can make no use of you to-day in such a dress.”

“The archbishop,” replied Dagobert, “has issued his orders against my ever appearing again in lay garments, and that at the expira-

tion of ten days I must prepare to take up my abode in a convent at Cesena."

"Indeed!" asked Frederick; "and your excursion to Franckfort?"

"I will set out to-morrow, if you command me," replied Dagobert; "but I must be back in nine days, and ready to depart for Italy."

"That is no bad calculation," said the duke, smiling! "but you will neither go to-morrow to Franckfort, nor afterwards to St. Bartholomew's cloister. Your services will be necessary to me to-day, and I trust the son of so good an elder will not depart from his word."

"Certainly not," rejoined Dagobert, gaily. "I care not for all the archbishops upon earth, and 'tis uncertain if I shall ever see any in heaven, when your highness requires my services. What can I do for you, noble Frederick?"

"I wish to extricate from a perilous situation a man to whom I am under obligations. It must be a matter of indifference to you whether he has fallen innocently or otherwise into his present difficulty, since I offer myself as his surety."

"At your command," replied Dagobert, "I

would rescue even a parricide from the stake; but how is this matter to be carried into execution?"

"Listen to me," replied the duke. "As soon as the vesper-bell tolls, repair on horseback to my palace, but take care that you be provided with weapons of defence. Upon your arrival, you will observe two men under the sloping roof on the right hand. One of them, whom you will see mounted upon a mule, is an acquaintance of yours; the other, who will be upon a gray horse, is the man whom it is necessary to carry off secretly. Proceed with them to the Schafhausengate, avoiding all the frequented streets, where a servant out of livery will await your arrival. When you have passed the arch of the gate, you must give your horse the spur, and beware that those who are under your charge do not remain behind. As your two companions are bad riders, you had better take the bridle of the gray horse, while the servant takes that of the mule, for you must reach Schafhausen as speedily as possible. You will there learn further particulars, and receive a pass to return. The affair, you see, is not complicated. Should any impediments arise

on the road, use your best wits to obviate them; only conduct your man safely to his destination. You now know what you have to do, and may therefore accept of this purse without scruple. It is not intended as a reward, but only as a further pledge of my friendship."

Dagobert made a bow, and taking the offered purse, said, "I have promised your highness my best services, and I will answer with my life for the security of the person whom you have placed under my protection."

"Well said!" replied Frederick. "May Heaven prosper your undertaking!"

At this moment the clasp of the duke's ermine mantle snapped, and the costly garment fell to the ground. "A bad prognostic," cried Frederick, jocularly. "Come, good youth, throw the cloak over my shoulders; the hands of a man devoted to the altar, by being employed in such a service, may dispel the evil omen."

Dagobert did as he was requested. "In truth," said he, "your highness stands in no need of outward ornament."

"Perhaps not," rejoined Frederick, somewhat proudly; "and therefore in my boorish country, as Sigismund calls it, I never carry

my dukedom about my person, while he is arrayed in all the idle gauds of the holy Roman empire. You should come to Tyrol. By heavens! it would make your heart leap. There, indeed, I am only dressed in boorish attire; but it is a good warm covering, which protects me from bad weather. Here, on the contrary, I am obliged to wear the frippery of a mountebank, that I may be gaped at by the multitude, and cheered by the rabble. His imperial majesty knows my popularity here, and therefore hates me; but by the ashes of the Hapsburgers, Sigismund may as soon expect that I should desert my own Inspruck, as forget what is due to my ancestors and to myself."

The duke's words were quite an enigma, but Dagobert, without troubling himself to solve it, hastened away to prepare to execute the commission with which he was intrusted. On his road he met Gerard, proceeding towards the lists, followed by a number of persons, all eager to array the doughty champion in his coat of mail. Gerard's countenance betrayed a vexation which he could but ill conceal, and upon Dagobert inquiring the reason, he alighted

from his horse, took the young deacon on one side, and said, "Think of my dilemma—my lean serving-man, who has attended me for ten years, as a shadow follows a body, has given me warning. The hungry varlet, who has the villanous malady of appetite, asserts that he grows leaner every day in my service. What an abominable calumny! I have let the mongrel pack, but it has so vexed me, that an old tabby might unhorse me, were I now to enter the lists with her."

"Be of good cheer," replied Dagobert, "your servant will no more leave you than you will leave him. Let me have the lean glutton to-day. I have some business to transact at a distance, which will detain me till the day after to-morrow. He shall be well fed during this interval, and I will answer for his returning to your service, if you will promise not to starve him, as you have hitherto done."

"With all my heart!" replied the cavalier; "but what do you mean by having business to transact—and to-day too, when all the gentry are assembled to celebrate a great festival? What am I to understand by this?"

"You are to understand that it is no concern

of yours. Where shall I find your serving man?"

"He is at the Mulberry Tree," replied Gerard. "You are as close as an untapped butt; you let nothing out. But be it so. I shall gain fame and rewards, while you—must I declare it—are riding about the villages after some trull, and will only get a broken head for your pains."

They separated, and Dagobert repaired to the Mulberry Tree. In the mean time, the mighty throng rolled in one dense mass towards the arena. The sun darted his warm rays upon their heads. The windows of all the surrounding houses were filled with anxious spectators. Upon the roofs and gables were a number of daring fellows, who appeared to delight in their danger, and prided themselves in sitting upon a loftier throne than the emperor himself. The space immediately around the lists became gradually more confined; for the nobles and cavaliers, who had been announced for the contest, advanced at a slow pace on horseback, surrounded by standard-bearers and trumpeters. They paired off in double and triple rows, around the railings of the arena,

which was still kept closed. Ladies, elegantly attired, now appeared in couples, and taking the lower seats, formed an interesting and beautiful spectacle. The dignitaries of the church, who, unlike the subaltern classes of the priesthood, felt no repugnance at being present at such exhibitions, occupied the benches appropriated to them, bowing to the lovely spectators who had just seated themselves, and bandying jokes with all the freedom of seculars. The entrances to the lists were still closed. No one had been yet permitted to pass the barriers. The umpires, however, now advanced through a narrow gate into the circle, nodded to the bailiffs of the tournament to preserve order, and to the musicians to strike up. At this moment the emperor entered the square, surrounded by a brilliant retinue of princes and nobles. His horse, a beautiful gray, was decorated with party-coloured plumes and ribbons embroidered with gold, and pranced proudly on, while by his side, the black stallion of the Duke of Austrian Tyrol preserved a measured pace. The princes of the palatinate rode behind Frederick. They were hailed with loud shouts, and the sounds of trumpets, as they

entered the gilded tent, where Sigismund, bowing to the assembled nobles, seated himself on the brocaded chair. The princes formed a circle round him, with Frederick on his left. All the remaining places were quickly occupied by the cavaliers and squires, the pages and attendants of the great; when, upon a white handkerchief being waved by Duke Frederick, the doors were thrown open, and the champions rode into the inner circle, amidst the clang of martial instruments, with their banners waving, their plumes nodding, and their lances glittering in the sun, ready for the encounter. They were now divided into parties, according to the regulations of the tournament. The musicians sounded, and the long-expected contest commenced.

While the vesper-bells were in vain summoning the spectators from the tournament to church, Dagobert knocked at Duke Frederick's gate. "Austria above all," replied he to the sentinel's challenge, and was immediately admitted. Upon seeing him the surly gate-keeper pointed towards the projecting roof of the stabling, under which Dagobert perceived the persons who were waiting for him. He was

not long in discovering that one of them was Ben David the Jew. He was lolling upon the back of his mule, his eyes fixed on vacancy, and appeared to be mumbling a prayer. But if the Jew cut a curious figure upon the long-eared brute which he bestrode, his companion was still more remarkable. The bridle of his horse hung loosely upon his arm, while he occasionally cast an oblique glance towards his suspicious neighbour, and then, directing his eyes to heaven, appeared also to be engaged in silent devotion. His lean figure was shrouded in a mean garment, such as a needy squire is wont to give to his more needy servant. It was easy to perceive that he was not at home in this dress. His knees were bent by the weight of his riding-boots, his cheeks were pressed upwards, and his chin galled by a stiff collar made of buffalo's hide; his gloves were too large, as well as his baldrick; from the latter hung a short sword, which was pushed behind as a thing rather ornamental than useful. His complexion was a dark brown like that of a Moor. His large eyes, of which the whites formed a strong contrast with the olive hue of his skin, rolled about in every direction, but were un-

common lively and expressive. His eyebrows were black and bushy, while there was not a trace of beard either on his cheeks or chin. Dagobert could not help smiling as he took a hasty survey of his fellow-travellers. "Now, my friend," said he, turning to the stranger, "are we ready to start? It is high time."

"It is, indeed," rejoined the Jew, looking anxiously at his companion, "let us proceed, worthy sir, while the streets are empty."

The stranger made an effort to mount his horse, but in vain, and Dagobert was obliged to put his shoulder under him, and thus lift him into the saddle. His appearance was now ridiculous in the extreme, his legs drawn up as high as the animal's mane, and holding with his left hand by the crupper. The folding gates were now thrown open, and this oddly assorted trio made the best of their way through the least frequented streets of the town, towards the Schafhausen gate. Dagobert felt much anxiety concerning his charge, when he perceived that he was no horseman, for the least trip of the animal jerked him out of his saddle, when he was obliged to seize the pommel and the crupper in order to maintain his position.

Dagobert rode behind with the Jew, in order that he might be able to keep his eye upon the stranger, and be at hand in case of accident.

"But tell me, Ben David," said he, "since you Jews know every thing, who is this companion of ours?"

"You wish to feed the sheep," replied the Hebrew, smiling, "and yet know not the chief shepherd who feeds you?"

"May I be a sheep if I understand you," rejoined Dagobert, "you are crazed, Jew."

"Not at all," replied Ben David, "but is it not enough to make one so, to think that the spiritual head of Christendom is obliged to ride away from his enemies, disguised as a servant, and in the escort of a Jew?"

"What do you tell me?" exclaimed Dagobert, incredulously, "is it possible that you can be speaking the truth?"

"As sure as I am riding my own mule," replied Ben David. "I only divine as much, but Ben David was never yet deceived in his guess." At this moment the stranger's horse was about to turn down a side street just as they had reached the gate, when Dagobert

seized the reins—"This way, countryman!" exclaimed he, and was preparing to lead him forward, when a voice cried out, "Halt!" and the sentinels at the gate hearing the cry, ran up and seized the horses' bridles. Dagobert had enough to do to keep his trembling charge from falling out of the saddle, and was therefore unprepared to offer any resistance. Ben David, who was well practised in the arts of dissimulation, turned to the men who had ordered them to halt, in whom he had recognised the town-clerk of Franckfort and the bailiff of Costnitz, and said, in that insinuating tone so peculiar to his tribe, "What may be your good pleasure, gentleman?" "To arrest thee, Jew," replied the town-clerk.

Ben David turned pale. "What means this interruption?" asked Dagobert, indignantly. "That concerns thee not, stripling," was the reply. "I have a warrant for the apprehension of the Jew; and let me tell you, young man, it does you little honour to be seen riding in such company."

"Did I understand you rightly?" asked Ben David.—"You have a warrant against me?"

"I have said it, Jew."

"But I have committed no crime!" observed Ben David, mildly.

"Dismount, I say," roared the town-clerk, "or I will have you dragged from your fellow-mule, and carried off with a gag in your jaws!"

"God in Israel!" exclaimed the trembling Hebrew with a groan, as he slipped from the saddle, "May I not be conveyed to my daughter?"

"No!" sternly replied the insolent official. "Thou wilt never see her more!—for early to-morrow morning thou wilt be taken to Franckfort, and then thou'lt never handle another gilder."

Ben David was so overcome with consternation that he could scarcely stand. The rider of the gray horse, who had by this time become an object of the witticisms of the gatekeepers, now pulled Dagobert by the sleeve. He, however, paid no attention to this appeal; but feeling an interest in the fate of Esther's father, although he was a Jew, boldly exclaimed, "I demand your authority for arresting this man!—What crime has he committed?"

"Away with the Hebrew!" bellowed the town-clerk of Franckfort.

"May I not take leave of my good friends here?" asked Ben David, with the deepest humility.

"For my part," replied the Franckfort functionary, "if the young galliard be not ashamed to call you friend, I have no objection to your bidding him a God speed; but be quick with it."

Ben David then advanced towards Dagobert, shook his hand with emotion and exclaimed, "May the Lord of Israel, the only true and only wise God, bless your departure and gladden your return! I conjure you to deliver over to my child either the piece of parchment which I now drop into your boots—or the money therein mentioned, which I was to take up at Schafhausen. Tell my Esther, she may ——"

"Thou circumcised malefactor!" cried the town-clerk of Franckfort, as he dragged the Jew from Dagobert's side, "What secrets have you here? Decamp, young fellow, speedily, or I shall secure your person also," said he to the young deacon.

"*Festina carissime file!*" whispered the stranger; when Dagobert, giving a nod of assent at

Ben David, seized the bridle of his companion's horse, and, pushing forward, soon reached the cross-road, where the lank serving-man of the disconsolate Gerard was basking, like a huge slug, in the sun.—“Hollo! up, you lazy buzzard,” cried Dagobert, “and to horse; and you, my worthy co-mate,” added he, to his troublesome companion, “must make up your mind to ride between us, for 'tis time we make the best of our way in order to secure your escape.” The stranger, upon whom the short ride through the town had already inflicted the pains of purgatory, uttered a sorrowful sigh, but submitting to necessity, acquiesced in the arrangement, when Dagobert and Gerard's serving-man placing themselves on each side of him, set spurs to their horses, and dashed along with their affrighted charge, as if they would reach the end of the world before sunset.

The journey, however, was performed without accident. It was quite dark when they reached Schafhausen. They were hospitably entertained by the duke's bailiff, who had received his master's orders to that effect. When they were alone, Dagobert bent his knee before the exalted fugitive, and said, “Holy Father! you

are in security. The duke has discharged the word of a prince towards you, and I have fulfilled my promise towards him. I thank God for it, and beseech your blessing."

The pope, although overcome by the unusual fatigue which he had undergone, placed his hands upon the head of his preserver, and said, with some emotion, "Accept our thanks, and the blessing of Heaven for the success which has attended thy efforts! But we shall not dismiss thee with an empty benediction. The duke has informed us that, according to thy mother's vow, thou hast been devoted to the service of the church; a service, however, not suited to thy mind, which pants for those honours obtained by deeds of arms. Considering that those hearts are alone acceptable to the Lord which are a gratuitous offering unto Him, and that God's service could not be availably performed by an unwilling servant—considering, moreover, thy readiness in our cause—we, in our most holy zeal for the salvation of sinful souls, promised the duke to grant thee a dispensation from thy vow, and we do herewith release thee from it, in the name of

the Most Holy Trinity, and by virtue of the power committed to us by the ineffable Triad."

The harsh voice of the chief shepherd sounded like music in Dagobert's ears, and he kissed not merely his hands, but also the hem of his garment, and was only prevented from embracing his sacerdotal toe, the ultimatum of papal fealty, by a cry from the holy father, caused by the twinge of a sacred bunyan which had nearly overspread the sanctified member. The pope now made him a sign to rise, and threw himself into the arm-chair, in order to receive the various functionaries of Schafhausen who, being just informed of the arrival of so august a guest, came to pay their homage, though late at night, alike to the head of the church and the friend of their master.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE flight of Pope John, which became generally known shortly after he had quitted the city, made an indescribable impression upon princes, priesthood, and people; while the tournament, which Duke Frederick made use of as a cloak to cover his design, caused much disappointment. Frederick did not attempt to conceal the fact, boldly declaring that he had provided the pope a safe escort, that John had been placed in great danger of losing both his tiara and his liberty by the cunning of the emperor, and the enmity of the council, and that he felt it to be therefore his duty, as a Christian prince, to baffle the designs of the pope's enemies. He maintained that every prince, and every gentleman, was bound by the articles of the tournament to protect the oppressed.

Frederick, deserted by his friends, bitterly

calumniated by those upon whose assistance he had reckoned, was obliged to relinquish the field to the detested Luxemburger, before the gathering storm should explode. He had to be thankful to his little band of knights, men at arms, and servants, that no obstacles were opposed to his departure. He was tormented by bitter feelings of shame at succumbing to his deadly enemy; nor did this escape the notice of Dagobert, who returned from Schafhausen the evening before Frederick's departure.

"What do you do here?" asked Frederick, in a tone of vexation; "Fly under the cover of night!—I am proscribed, as well as all who are attached to me. Accursed be the treachery of those who have deserted me! Honour, candour, and fidelity are mere empty sounds!—the world is made up of fraud and falsehood! Fly, good Dagobert! I can only reward your attachment at present by advising you to leave this town: it is already rumoured that you have participated in my act of treachery, as they call it. Fly, then, from the perils that surround you; but not with me, for I have lost the game! At a proper season, however, you shall hear from me."

Dagobert, who was paralyzed at the unexpected issue of his adventure, assured the duke of his fidelity and devotion, and of his determination not to forsake his party.

Frederick shook his head, "That cannot be! How could I contribute to your necessities? Go—where the duty of a son summons you—to Franckfort! and think of me when the priest shall release you from the conditions of your mother's vow."

"My kind benefactor!" exclaimed Dagobert, kissing Frederick's hand; "it is hard for me to leave you."

"But it is necessary!" rejoined the duke, turning from him, in order to conceal his emotion. "Go home, embrace your father and mother, and rejoice in your liberty! But before we part, I will give you once more an opportunity of doing yourself honour and me a kindness. The poor Jew, whose gold was to be made available for the tournament, and upon whom I drew a bill, which has been protested by my rogue of a treasurer at Schafhausen, has, I hear, been carried off to Franckfort, upon some sinister impeachment. The daughter of the unhappy man has thrown herself at my feet, and entreated my intercession. My

influence is no more; nevertheless, I have given her my word that she shall be taken home. I therefore depute you, on this occasion, the maiden's guide and protector. Conduct her safely to her father's house, and God be with you!"—The duke waved his hand, and Dagobert retired. His feelings were most painfully excited, and with a mind harassed by contending emotions, he repaired to his uncle's house. The abbot received him with an indignant frown.

"What has brought you hither?" said he, his anger rising as he spoke. "You never bring joy along with you. You come uninvited, like a disease, and go not away without leaving mischief behind you."

"You are unjustly severe," replied Dagobert. "We rejoice at the departure of a disease—and you will, no doubt, rejoice at mine! but as I am going to my father, I wished—as becomes a good relation—to inquire if you had a letter or any message to intrust me with. This is likely to be our last meeting, as I shall probably never again quit my native country. This is no place for me, and even St. Bartholomew's cloister at Cesena"—

"You are perfectly right, nephew: after

what you have done, that holy sanctuary is no place for you. Your pranks are too well known at Costnitz. May Heaven forgive you! Will Duke Frederick, think you, reward your services with a rich living in his land of boors?"

"Boors, say you, my good uncle! why they are a sort of living currency; there are boors here, boors there, and boors every where! But to be serious. The duke is not indebted to me, and I have no imperial protector, as you have, worthy uncle, who can shake benefactions out of his sleeve upon those who can do him a certain service."

"What have I to do with the emperor," asked the abbot angrily. "A truce, however, to vexation now. I was warm, Dagobert; but 'tis past—the Christian spirit of forbearance returns; and that you may see how little disposed I am to visit insolence with merited severity, I will allow you to remain here to supper, which Florilla will prepare for you, whilst I am writing a line to your father. But you must quit Costnitz with the dawn. Is your horse at the Angel?"

"In sooth, good uncle, he, like his master, is under the protection of an angel," replied

Dagobert, looking slyly at Florilla. "Thank God! I am safe in the house of my father's brother."

"Amen!" added Jerome, as he hobbled out of the room; while Florilla proceeded to the cellar.

Dagobert now flung himself upon a sofa. "The events of the last few days appear to me like the fictions of a dream. I thought I was rescuing some criminal from the fangs of the law, when, behold! it turns out to be the pope himself, who rewards me by absolving me from the vexatious conditions of a parent's vow; while, as I understand, the council denounces me as an enemy to the church. Before I went to Schafhausen, my good uncle and myself were upon no friendly footing; now we are like two turtles. We tell each other truths as dry and thorny as the sloe-hedge in winter—and yet he offers me a kindness, and I graciously accept it. Poor man! I verily believe that he has lost both the pope's and the emperor's favour! I walked at liberty about Costnitz, after endeavouring to liberate a heretic; and now the duke himself advises me to make a rapid retreat, because I assisted the father of the faithful out of a dilemma! Once again

within the walls of my native town—then farewell emperor and council—I meddle with your affairs no more !”

“ Well, cousin !” continued he to Florilla, who now entered with wine and other refreshments, “ I shall never get a sight of your native land : I will, however, avail myself of this favourable moment to imprint a farewell kiss upon your ruby lips.”

Florilla forcibly disengaged herself, and appeared in a state of unusual agitation.

“ Why so timid, maiden ?”

“ Alas !” replied she, “ if you do not instantly depart, you are undone.”

“ Depart !” said Dagobert, jocularly, “ what ! before supper ? Will you not first pledge me in a glass of Rhenish from my good uncle’s cellar ?”

“ I would rather secure to you your liberty,” said Florilla. “ Fly, while you have time ! Your uncle meditates some ill towards you. He left the house but a few moments since, with the servant, who carried a lantern. I listened behind the door of the cellar, and heard him say to the boy—‘ Take care and light properly. You must run from the cardinal’s house to the

Angel as quick as you can!"—They then shut the door carefully, and went away. You are about to be betrayed."

"Betrayed!" exclaimed Dagobert, incredulously; "and by my father's brother! What end could he have in view?"

"Alas! you know not what has happened," rejoined the maiden, with increased anxiety. "Wallrade's connexion with Sigismund is at an end. She has incurred the ridicule of her former suitors and of the world. The bright star of your uncle's expectations is set for ever. He who deserted the pope for the emperor, is treated with scorn by the latter, and despised by both. But since the holy father's flight, in which you are said to have assisted, your uncle has been falsely suspected of being a secret supporter of the refugee; and, to complete his misfortunes, the distressing intelligence reached him yesterday that the Chapter, weary of his long absence and of his extravagance, have superseded him by a fresh election, and have besought the Council to confirm their choice. This intelligence came upon him like a thunderbolt; and the miserable abbot, in order to propitiate the conclave, is now gone to the .

treacherous Colonna to betray you, his nephew, as the principal agent in the pope's abduction, hoping by one villanous action to atone for others of less importance."—"There is no room for delay," exclaimed the ex-deacon, interrupting her. "But how shall I escape? You say they have locked the doors."

"I have a second key, and will open the gate for you."

"Thanks, fair cousin," said Dagobert, seizing Florilla's hand; "how can I reward you?"

"By allowing a little friend of mine, who is afraid to go alone, to accompany you a part of the way. The boy is waiting without, conduct him safely to his own house."—"If it lies on the road," said Dagobert, "and he is alert on his legs, I will do it willingly for my sweet cousin's sake. Now give me your cheek. May God reward you. Farewell!"

He now hastily quitted the room. Florilla's young friend, a fine boy, strangely disguised in a loose dress, borrowed from the abbot's wardrobe, with a cap drawn down over his forehead and eyes, joined him on the dark staircase. "Put your best foot forward, boy," said Dagobert, as soon as they gained the street; "we

have still some way to make, if you live out of the town." The boy, who ran by his side, nodded a silent assent, and Dagobert hastened forward until he arrived in the street, which he had once measured with steps no less hasty than when he fled from the cloister. The remembrance of Esther, and of the duke's parting injunction now flashed upon his mind, and he remained undetermined what to do. "Shall I abandon the idol of my heart? Have I not promised to be her protector? and both for Frederick's sake and my own I will redeem my pledge."

"Lord of my life!" ejaculated his companion; when Dagobert exclaimed, with emotion, "That voice—I cannot be mistaken."—"Can you pardon me," said she, about to sink at his feet, when, raising the cap, he discovered the well-known features of the lovely Esther. "Unhappy girl!" said he, with tenderness. "But this is neither time nor place for explanation; support yourself on my arm, and reserve all communication until you are in a place of safety."

They now hurried forward until they entered an obscure street, in a remote part of the

city, when Dagobert, leading Esther under the dark portico of a church, placed her almost breathless upon a bench. "You must rest a moment here," said he; "but tell me, do you consent to follow me to Franckfort, where your father is now imprisoned?"

"My father is innocent," rejoined Esther. "Believe me, he is innocent."

"I doubt it not," replied her protector. "We will set off this very night. My horse and servant are in a stable hard by. Follow me so far, and we will consider by what means we can proceed the most expeditiously." He supported her onward. "Have you considered every thing," said he. "Dare you confide in a stranger?"

"Believe me," replied Esther; "when I assure you, that as certainly as the buds on the hedges announce the spring, so surely do I repose the most perfect confidence in you. There is not one in the wide world to whom I could so securely trust my life and honour. You will conduct me to my father, and restore peace to my troubled bosom. You will then take leave of me for ever, but my heart will preserve a remembrance of you, and the ever-

lasting gratitude which I owe you. My supplications shall ascend to heaven for your welfare, and the most High and Holy One will not reject a Jewish maiden's prayer."

"Enough!" exclaimed Dagobert. "Let us first reach the goal before you talk of gratitude. I am proud of your confidence; but I cannot accompany you beyond the gates of Franckfort. Thence you must find your way alone to your father's house; and then forget for ever the unhappy Dagobert."

"Be it so," sighed Esther, while tears bedewed her lovely cheeks. Her companion, on the contrary, who had just achieved a great victory over his own heart, and now considered that he had discovered the talisman which would enable him to resist every temptation, hastened to prepare for the journey, upon which the travellers proceeded at the first dawn of morning.

CHAPTER XVII.

Who is there that has not rejoiced to feel the influence of that glorious change when winter resigns his empire, and the vegetable kingdom smiles under a more genial dominion! Where is the being who has not been filled with gratitude to the God of creation when he has walked forth surrounded by all the harmonies of nature beneath the sunny rays of spring? Does not this season of universal exultation speak peace to the unquiet heart, and inspire the hope of reconciliation with its God? Is not the soul disarmed of hatred when the voice of gladness speaks from every mute object around? But the passions encircle the human heart as with a wall of ice, which not even the genial sun of spring can thaw. Impetuous youth cares little for that period of delight when "the voice of the turtle is heard in our land," because, in its ungovernable

wishes, it seeks not the sun's heat in order to enjoy happiness. It is the privilege of riper years alone to comprehend life's true value, and to know that its changes are represented in the vicissitudes of the year.

Diether Frosch, the elder, was enjoying in their fullest extent the enlivening beauties of a vernal morning. He sauntered up and down the little garden that surrounded his country-house near town, a plain but peaceable retreat, and which, notwithstanding its simple style of architecture and arrangement, he valued more than his proud mansion at Franckfort. Leaning on his wife's arm, he slowly strolled along the smooth gravel walk, enjoying the balmy breeze and early sun. Margaret, lost in thought, but still keeping an anxious eye upon her husband, and little Hans, who was playing with Else in the garden, was as silent as the elder. As he complained of slight fatigue, she conducted him to a bench near the house-door, when Diether seating himself, said, "My love, I have hitherto avoided entering upon a subject which has long disturbed my peace. It cannot have escaped your notice that I have

latterly exhibited less tenderness towards you than formerly. Alas ! I cannot deny that from the day on which your brother visited us, with his usual presumption, my mind has been tortured by the most agonizing suspicions. I ought never to have listened to the insinuations of a villain. I feel smitten to the very soul for the wrong I have done you, and now implore you, under the glorious canopy of heaven, and in the presence of our child, to pardon me for the cruel doubts which I lately entertained towards you."

"I have nothing to pardon, dearest," said Margaret, with some surprise, "how can you suppose—"

"Nay, my love," rejoined Diether, "I like plain dealing. Revile me as I deserve, for having doubted your honour upon the testimony of a scoundrel. No," continued he, kissing his wife's cheek, and pressing her hand, "this sweet countenance could never assume the smiles of deceit, nor this fair hand injure him whom it has lately nursed with such tenderness."

"Heavens !" cried Margaret, "is it possible

that you could have believed me to be false? May the holy angels pardon you, as I do, for this base suspicion."

"If you forgive me, love," replied Diether, "I can have no doubt about the holy angels. Henceforth you shall have no reason to complain. My illness has made me quite another man. I have an ardent desire to see around me those who are dear to me—my brother and my children. Even Wallrade, in spite of her undutifulness, I long to behold once more."

"Time may have subdued her bitterness of spirit," replied his wife, meekly. "Though she refused to be called my daughter, she may probably now consent to be my friend."

"No doubt she will," said Diether, "time subdues all things, even the stubborn spirit as well as the marble column. Is it not, however, strange that I have received no answer to my letter. I flattered myself that ere this I should have had my brother and children around me; but the old man has in vain looked for their arrival—they refuse to approach him."

"Still you have your wife and child" said Margaret, tenderly, at the same time raising little Hans, and putting him upon her hus-

band's lap. "Is it essential to your happiness to possess other hearts than those which are now near you and have an affection for you?"

"Not so, my beloved," replied the old man with emotion, as he caressed his wife and the boy alternately; "but if I love you more dearly than those who are absent, I cannot forget that they are still my children."

A voice neither strange to Margaret nor to her husband, was now heard at the entrance of the garden. "Shall I find the Elder here?"

"'Tis Wallrade," exclaimed Diether, unable to rise from his seat from the united infirmities of age and sickness. Wallrade, attended by Else, approached with a slow and haughty step. "My daughter!" cried Diether, opening his arms, while tears of joy rolled down his withered cheeks; but she turned from him with an expression of cold reserve. "Welcome, Wallrade," said Margaret, offering her hand; but Wallrade took no notice of the courteous greeting. She surveyed her father and stepmother for some time in silence, and at length said, in a tone of unnatural asperity, "Your appearance, sir, I find, has not improved with your years!" Diether, overcome by those feelings of which

age is doubly susceptible, took no notice of these words, which penetrated Margaret's warm heart like a two-edged sword. "For that, perhaps, he may owe something to a child's ingratitude," said she pointedly, but mildly. "Your father waits to embrace you."

Wallrade approached the elder, coldly kissed his cheek, and made a stiff courtesy to her step-mother. "My beloved child!" said Diether, as he drew her to the seat beside him, "how the sight of you rejoices my old heart! You are the first to return to your father's house, while my son and brother remain afar off." Wallrade curling her lip, turned towards Margaret, and said, "Worthy madam, if my long absence has caused my father to think ill of me, as I hear it has, I presume I have still less to expect from your good opinion."

"You are mistaken," she replied, calmly, "my husband loves you; and to me, therefore, you can be no unwelcome guest."—"Well said," cried Diether, as he extended his hand towards her; "an old man can rarely hope to gather into his winter wreath a flower like you, and I am sure that Wallrade must become your friend. Embrace each other in my pre-

sence, and let all hostile feelings be henceforth stifled for ever. Now, my daughter, kiss your little brother, the solace of my age."

Wallrade cast a stern look at the boy, who had concealed himself behind Margaret. "Go, Hans," continued Diether, "and embrace your sister." "Fie, child," said his supposed mother, "what are you ashamed of?—What must Wallrade think of you?—You need not hide yourself—you are no monster—come." She drew the bashful boy from his hiding-place, and was astonished at his evident terror. He stood trembling, and with a countenance as pale as death. He would neither approach nor speak to the stranger. This bashfulness, for which neither Diether nor his wife could account, did not appear to be at all agreeable to Wallrade. Her eyes sparkled with anger, her lips quivered, and the whole expression of her countenance denoted unusual agitation. She flung the child's hand from her when Margaret, in whose arms he had taken refuge, extended it forcibly towards her, and then drawing her veil over her face, said, in a tone of bitter sarcasm, "As the young gentleman finds my countenance so offensive, I do best to hide it from

him. This produced some effect upon the boy, who appeared to be more reconciled, for every now and then he raised his blue eyes to gaze upon Wallrade's rich dress, and the splendid rings which glittered upon her fingers. When asked the reason of his terror, he made no reply, but whenever Margaret endeavoured to place him between herself and Wallrade, this terror was renewed, and he sought refuge in the lap of his supposed mother. Wallrade's pride was offended.—“You must have prejudiced this child against me,” said she: “if his sister has been represented to him as a monster, he may well avoid her.”—“Never!” exclaimed Diether, with fervour, “my wife has never misrepresented you.” “I confess, however,” resumed Wallrade, “that I do not like children, and I cannot make an exception, even in favour of my worthy stepmother's son; I must therefore request that, while I am under my father's roof, the sight of this unnatural brother may be spared me.”

“Oh, certainly,” replied Margaret, evidently piqued, and she began to tie the child's cap.

“Am I to conclude from your words, dear Wallrade!” asked Diether, tenderly, “that you

do not intend to make my house your future home?"

"Certainly not!—I have been so long accustomed to be mistress in my own house, that both my habits of life, and the regulations of your establishment would be, probably, alike disagreeable to your wife and to myself. I shall, therefore, take up my abode at the Squirrel, for the short period of my stay at Franckfort." The elder could not conceal his disappointment, and was about to reply, when Margaret interrupted him.

"It is far from our wish," said she, "to interfere with the young lady's arrangements, but I hope she will not refuse her father the happiness of seeing her at his table?—where I promise her she shall receive no annoyance from her stepmother's son."

"You do me very great honour, good lady!" returned Wallrade, in a tone of the most pointed irony, "and to convince you of the sincerity of my gratitude, I invite you to return with me to town, when I will give my father some information respecting my uncle, who sends his affectionate remembrance to him."

"I cannot but regret," rejoined Diether, as

he was preparing to go, supported upon Wallrade's arm, "that he is not here to tell his own story, and that Dagobert, upon whose filial affection I had fully relied, still remains away."

"Say nothing of Dagobert," replied Wallrade, affecting deep emotion. At the same time she drew so false a picture of his life at Costnitz, that her father's heart was wrung to agony. The entire ascendancy which this infamous woman so soon gained over the infirm Diether, the mortifying taunts which she perpetually directed towards her stepmother and the boy, stung Margaret to the soul.

"Hans," said she, caressing the boy when Wallrade and the elder had entered the house, "go not near that vile woman; she will perhaps offer you sweet cakes in order to decoy you. For every cake you refuse to take from her hand, I will give you two."

"Oh!" said he, "I will go no more to the black woman!"

"Nonsense, child!"

"Dear mother," he continued, "this is that black woman who wishes to kill me."

"Silly boy! Wallrade is your sister, Hans;—but a bad sister, although she wears fine

clothes. She wishes to make beggars of us all. Remember what I have told you." These cautions, however, were unnecessary, for the child and stepdaughter never met.

Diether, who was equally a good husband and father, acted the part of mediator between the hostile parties, and thus harmony appeared to be restored in his house.

Wallrade gained fresh interest with her father, as she adopted an extremely regular course of conduct, and Diether, having declared to all his friends that a perfect reconciliation had taken place between her and her parents, received their hearty congratulations. In the fulness of his heart, he never imagined that the gulf which separated Margaret and Wallrade was wider than ever.

A week had elapsed, when Wallrade, quitting her father's house in ill-humour, returned to her apartments at the Squirrel. Upon entering, she was welcomed by her female companion, who said, "I am overjoyed at your return, for I have this day been tormented by very extraordinary fancies."

"What were they?" asked Wallrade, coldly.

"The fineness of the afternoon induced me,"

replied her companion, "to stroll with my little daughter into the town. In passing through one of the most populous streets, I thought I perceived my husband. "Rudolph!" I exclaimed, in a state of mind bordering on frenzy, while the child, as if participating in my feelings, cried out, "Father!" The man turned round; but, oh, how bitter was my disappointment!"

"And well you deserved this disappointment," retorted Wallrade. "Did I not forbid you to show yourself in the town. I well knew that this lawless passion of yours would furnish amusement to the street-gapers."

"Be not angry with me I beseech you—what would become of me if I should forfeit your friendship. I have another strange occurrence to relate to you. While pressing my weeping child fervently to my bosom, a young man stood on a sudden before me, and I had no difficulty in recognising him to be the same who paid us the mysterious visit at Costnitz, which caused my husband's melancholy."

"Psha!" said Wallrade, affecting incredulity, but with evident uneasiness, "this is another wild creation of your brain."

"Not so," continued Catharine, "I know his noble features too well. He appeared not less astonished than I was."

"Ha! Madame Von der Rhön," said he, "is it possible that I see you in Franckfort? you must have lost your husband in the crowd. Can I supply his place in protecting you to your inn?"

"A rare piece of gallantry in good sooth!" said Wallrade, with a sneer, but betraying at the same time increased uneasiness, "and you, doubtless, accepted his offer and undeceived him!"

"I certainly allowed him to conduct me home," replied Catharine, but could not so far overcome my timidity as to satisfy the earnest inquiries which he made after Von der Rhön, and the reason of our sojourn here. He took his leave at the door, after uttering these remarkable words, 'Make the stranger's salutations to your husband, noble lady, and tell him that he has not chosen a proper time to tarry here. His evil spirit is abroad. I will pay him a visit in a few days, and God grant that I may be enabled to bring him better tidings.'"

Wallrade frowned, and remained for some

moments absorbed in thought. "This man," said she at last, "is doubtless your husband's enemy. Rely upon it he intends you some mischief. You must avoid him, otherwise my stay here is at an end."

"Nay," said Catharine, looking anxiously in Wallrade's countenance, "You assured me that you would procure further information of the unhappy refugee through your numerous connexions here; oh! forget not your promise, I beseech you. Without friends or property, I am unable to obtain it by my own exertions."

"I never yet neglected to perform my promise," replied Wallrade, "I have obtained the information you desire, and, whatever pain it may cost me, I will now tell you the result of my inquiries."

Catharine, fixed her eyes anxiously upon Wallrade's forbidding brow, and exclaimed with extreme emotion—"What of my husband—speak—"

"You will see him no more," said Wallrade, coldly, the dread of divine wrath has driven him from his native land, not the emperor's anger.—He is an outcast."

"An outcast?" exclaimed Catharine hyste-

rically! "What crime has he committed?—Oh! speak, dear Wallrade—tell me—"

"Von der Rhön," replied her unfeeling tormentor, "has violated God's holy law, for before he married you he had been united to another."

"No more!" cried Catharine, with a cry of anguish. Wallrade, however, continued: "the woman and her children whom he deserted, drag on a miserable existence in poverty and bereavement, still they are less objects of compassion than you and your child, for your marriage with the traitor involves you in ignominy, while your offspring is the infamous fruit of guilt."

Catharine shrieked, and fell senseless to the earth.

Instead of commiserating her sufferings, however, the unfeeling Wallrade only uttered the most malignant denunciations of vengeance upon the heads of Von der Rhön, Catharine, and their child.

A servant now entered the room, and started back upon seeing Catharine upon the floor.

"What do you want?" asked Wallrade angrily.

“ Rudiger is come back,” said the maid, unable to conceal her alarm.

Wallrade’s countenance brightened, “ I will go and speak with him ; in the mean time, do you remain here.”

Rudiger now informed her that he had made inquiries at Wiesbaden and other places respecting the child, and all that he had learnt tended to confirm that he was the son of her father and stepmother. Willhild had nursed the boy, and had taken him last autumn to his parents. Wallrade was greatly enraged at this intelligence, and calling Rudiger a moon-calf, told him that she would inquire herself upon the spot whether he had properly executed her orders.

When Rudiger was gone, she began to consider how she might the most securely realize her wicked purposes. “ If I remain longer here,” said she mentally, “ an open rupture will follow between my stepmother and myself. This I must avoid until I can venture an attempt upon her life. I must shun my brother too,—I will see this Willhild and force the truth from her. Margaret must be destroyed, for she is playing a game which bodes me no good.

What could make the boy shun me as if I were a serpent? However, before I visit Wiesbaden, I must prepare a poison for Diether's ear, which shall rankle in his marrow for the wretched remnant of his days."

A piteous voice was now heard without, crying "For the love of Heaven let me see her!" when Bilger's wife, with dishevelled hair and tattered garments, rushed into the chamber whither Wallrade had retired.

"I could not keep her back," cried the maid, who followed immediately upon her steps, perceiving in her mistress's truculent aspect, the anger which this intrusion had occasioned. Catharine staggered towards Wallrade, who nodded to the servant to withdraw, and seizing her hand, cast at her a look of unutterable sorrow.

"What brings you here, Catharine Von der Rhön," asked Wallrade, sternly.

"Oh, mention not the unhappy name which was once the pride of my existence, but will henceforth imbitter my days!"

"By what name then am I to call you?"

"Alas!" replied Catharine, "have I lost your friendship as well as my own honour?"

When my husband deserted me and my child, I found consolation for his loss in your bosom, and refused, by your advice, our gracious emperor's bounty, which would have provided for my future days. Do not then desert me now under my present dreadful visitation."

"What can I do for you?" asked Wallrade, while a savage smile passed over her handsome features.

"Be not angry with me if I am still doubtful; pity my weakness, and tell me if it is not possible that you may have been deceived?"

Wallrade raised her head indignantly. "I am no liar, woman—what I told thee is but too true. The wretched creature, whom the traitor Von der Rhön first married was born here, and was of noble descent, but never hope to learn from me her name, or the place where she abides with her deserted children."

"Do tell me, I implore you?"

"Indeed!" replied Wallrade, jeeringly, "in order, I suppose, that you may disturb her solitude with your complaints and imprecations?"

"How cruel is the opinion you form of me; why should I vent imprecations upon her who has been as deeply injured as I have?"

"This is all very fine," observed Wallrade—"however, it is right, as you have shared with Von der Rhön in his guilt, that you should participate also in his punishment."

"Alas! why taunt me with my infamy? look where I will, I am covered with shame. Never can I again pronounce my name in the presence of a stranger."

"You must relinquish it for ever, for there can be only one who has the right to bear the name of Von der Rhön, and that is his lawful wife, which you are not; you have only now to retire from the world and expiate your guilt in solitude."

"Alas!" replied Catharine, weeping, "where shall I find that solitude which can afford relief to a being so wretched as I am?"

"I would willingly offer you an asylum in my house," replied Wallrade, with affected compassion, "but that visitors would interrupt your retirement; and moreover, the world might condemn me for harbouring a woman who had lost her character."

Catharine wrung her hands in agony. "What alternative, then, remains to me? my parents are dead, the emperor's assistance I have refused—",

"And well you did so. The emperor is an adept in making fools of weak women. I would rather beg my bread from door to door than suffer myself to become the dupe of a capricious libertine."

"I have no alternative but to apply to him," said Catharine, with a sigh: "my friend rejects me, and what am I to expect from strangers?" Saying this, she staggered to the door.

Wallrade called her back, and affected to commiserate her distress. "Can you think that I desire your unhappiness?" said she: "follow my advice. There is a refuge which is ever open to the contrite. Throw yourself into the arms of your Redeemer. I am acquainted with the abbess of the Convent *Des Dames blanches*, who, upon my application, would gladly receive you among the holy sisterhood over whom she presides. Within those sacred walls you will be secure. You will there regain, by prayer and penitence, that peace of mind which you have lost by transgression. Exchange the sinful name you bear for one more acceptable to Heaven, and thus may you finally gain that crown of 'glory which fadeth not away.'"

Catharine, pale as marble, fixed her eyes

upon Wallrade. "Oh! how frequently have I heard," said she, "that peace dwells not within the cloister. I am still young and innocent, why then should I bury myself within the walls of a nunnery?"

"As you please," replied Wallrade, coldly. "I have given you my honest advice, and you may repent, when too late, of not having followed it. Your determination, however, can in no wise concern me; still I must request that you will do me the favour to avoid my house for the future, as I do not choose to harbour an outcast under my roof."

This cruel speech put an end at once to Catharine's opposition. A flood of tears gushed from her eyes, as she threw herself in despair at Wallrade's feet. "Oh! Wallrade," said she, "if when you called me friend, your lips declared the feelings of your heart, hurl me not down like the stricken deer. If you have no compassion for *me*, take pity at least upon my innocent child, who should not suffer for the guilt of her parents. Alas! how shall I stand alone in my misery when every support is torn from under me?"

"You feel, then," said Wallrade, angrily,

"that the whirlpool is dragging you into its vortex, and yet you delay seeking a secure haven. You deserve that I should suffer you to perish, but my heart turns once more towards you. Promise me to repair to the convent which I have recommended, and you may then assure yourself of my friendship. You may there at once expiate your own crime, and make atonement for him who first seduced you into guilt."

"Oh, what a thought you have stirred within me!" rejoined Catharine; "yes, I will perform a terrible penance for the sake of his and my own soul. But," added she, trembling with apprehension, "what will become of my child?"

"Your humility and obedience will not be without its reward," said Wallrade. "I will be a mother to your babe. We will occasionally visit you in your seclusion, where you may still indulge a parent's tenderness."

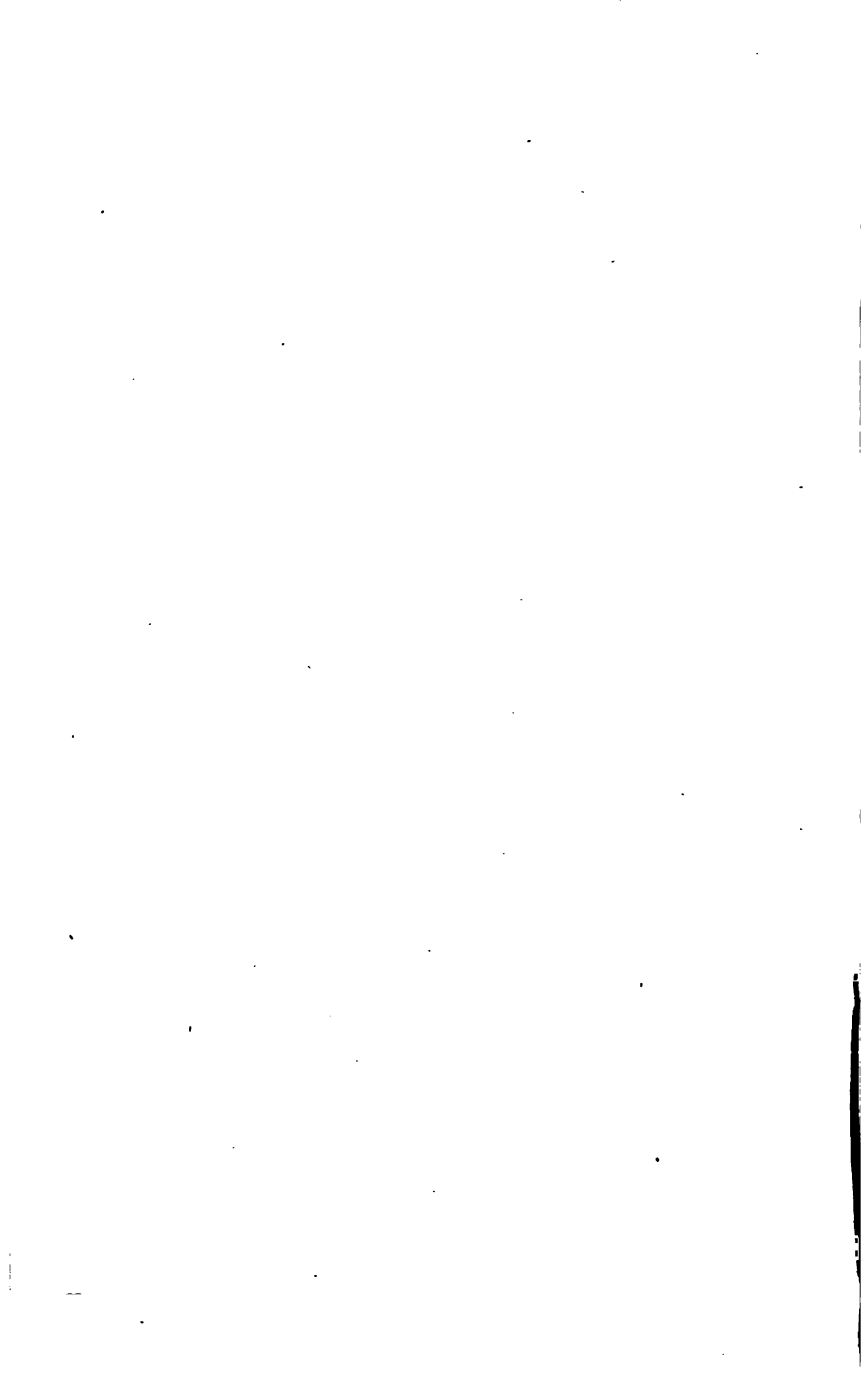
Catharine, overpowered with gratitude, fell upon Wallrade's neck. "You are an angel," she exclaimed, in a transport of joy; "you whom I so lately looked upon as my enemy, I now revere as my greatest benefactress!"

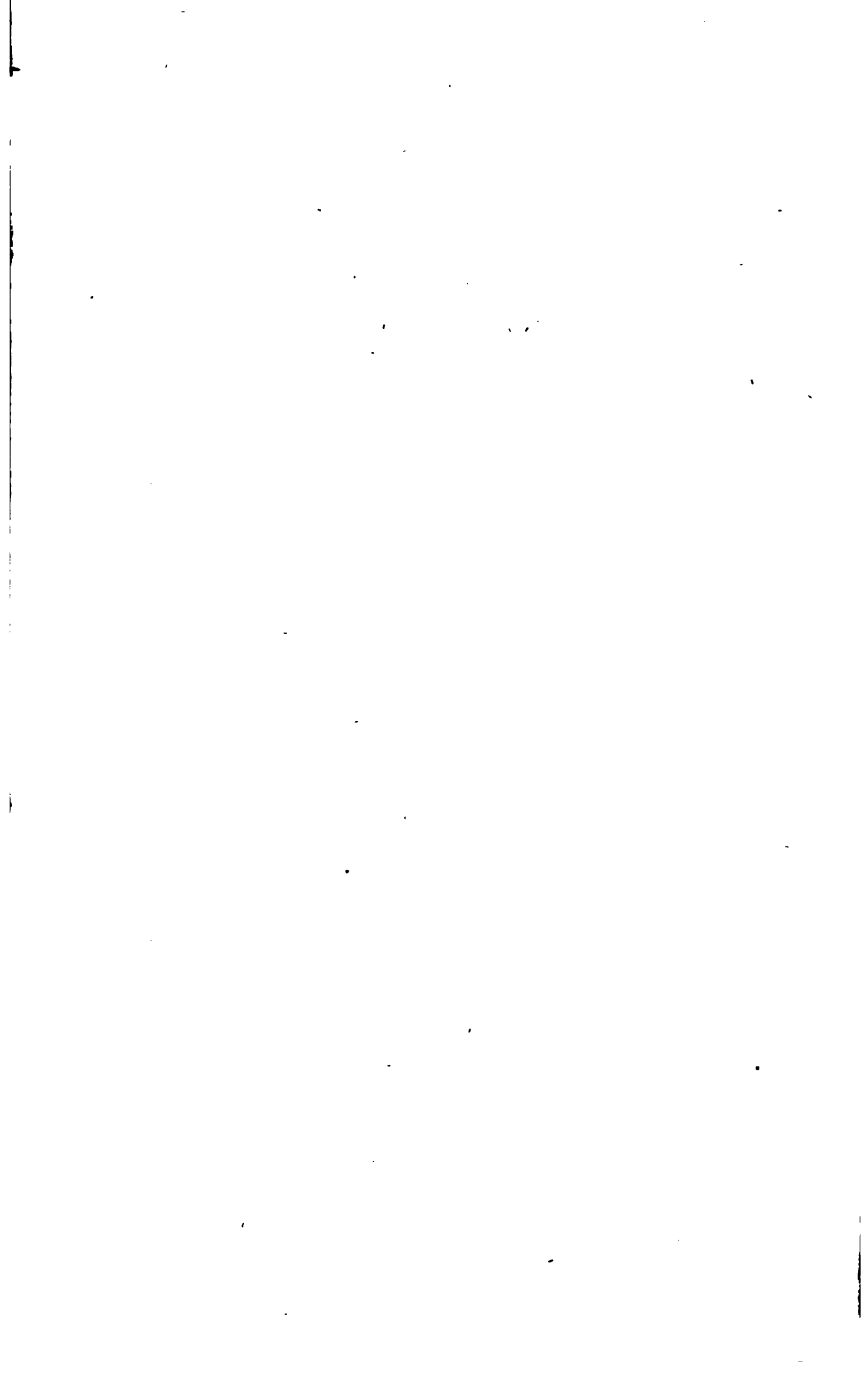
Wallrade, who was by this time weary of the

scene, hastened to terminate it. She assured Catharine of her unalterable good-will, and after exhorting her to adhere stedfastly to her resolution, promised to introduce her on the following day into the nunnery *Des Dames blanches*.

END OF VOL. I.

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